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The Week

THE conference of the League's Preparatory Commission on Limitation of Armament at Geneva has adjourned in an atmosphere about as gloomy as that in which it met. Ambassador Gibson's first speech, in which he proposed the new mathematical formula for comparison of tonnage, and insisted that armament must be not only limited but reduced, sent a thrill of hope through the tired diplomats of Europe, but this was dissipated as the days wore on without the production of any second step in the same direction. Indeed, the Americans themselves were responsible for a chilling of enthusiasm when they agreed, or seemed to agree, to the French thesis that trained reservists should not be counted in a computation of military resources—an argument which, needless to say, is incompatible with any effective limitation. The hostile reaction to this stand was so strong that at the end of last week steps were taken to counteract it, with the

explanation that the United States still disapproves of the exclusion of reservists, but withdraws from the dispute, leaving it to be settled by the powers chiefly concerned. The German and Russian efforts to obtain consideration of plans for reduction which would really reduce were unavailing, as were all attempts to propose schemes which would abolish conscription. As the Conference ended, reports were rife that the five chief naval powers might send their experts soon to a meeting, perhaps in Washington, at which the new mathematical formulas would be considered, and scales of values, in speed, tonnage, age and armament, worked out. This is a useful task, but we must remember that it carries no guarantee whatever of either limitation or reduction. Experience has shown that the naval experts are the last persons in the world to send to a conference which is to cut the navies' claws. That task must be done by statesmen in the light of political and legal arrangements; Dr. Buell shows elsewhere in this issue how much the Kellogg Treaty has altered the setting in which the next conference must take place.

WHEN Ambassador Gibson made his statement on trained reservists, the reason given was that we regard this as purely a European question. Our army is so small, it was said, that no scale of reduction which is politically possible could bring other nations down to our level, and as to reservists, we don't have them, since we don't have conscription between wars but only while they are in progress. This last statement is technically true, but it needs a little added to it. The United States now has 115,000 trained reserve officers, capable, it is estimated, of guiding an army of 3,500,000 men. These officers, the fruit of the R. O. T. C. in schools and colleges, and the Military Training Camps which are now so popular, are appointed for five years, and are increasing at the rate of 5,000 a year. There are 40,000 of them who are taking correspondence courses designed to bring them up to date in military science. If these 115,000 men don't constitute trained reserves, what are they? Is it possible that their existence had anything to do with the new attitude of this country at Geneva,

which seemed to Europe to constitute a right-about-face to an acceptance of the French point of view?

A MEMORABLE decision of the Colorado Industrial Commission, just rendered, declares that the miners in the lignite mines in the northern part of the state should have the same rights of collective bargaining, and the same wages and working conditions, as those now enjoyed by agreement between the organized miners and the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company. It will be remembered that this company, which controls about one-quarter of the production of the section, instituted a whole set of new and intelligent policies when it came under the control of Miss Josephine Roche, an eminent social worker, after a disastrous strike in which a number of persons were killed by mine guards. It recognized the United Mine Workers, granted check-weighmen and an increase in wages, and announced that it would no longer sell coal below the cost of production to the large consumers, at the expense of the small users. Coöperation with the miners for more efficient practices has, according to the testimony of Mr. Merle Vincent, president of the company, brought noticeable results. Some of the larger consumers have already capitulated and signed contracts at a price covering the costs of production. Naturally the employees of the other mines of the region, represented by organized labor, have petitioned for similar action on the part of their own employers, and now the Industrial Commission, as a result of hearings, has granted their request.

THIS is a striking example of the power of intelligent leadership on the part of an employer, in a state where warfare between capital and labor has accompanied the disorganization of the coal industry for years. The task of the company was made easier because of its large proportion of the production of the region. Furthermore, the same methods probably could not be applied with equal success to the coal industry nationally, because the producers of this region are protected against outside competition by the cost of transportation. It does show, however, what could be done if there were some force in the national coal industry capable of controlling production. And it also shows the advantage, to any producer, of collective bargaining and coöperation with labor under stabilized conditions. Mr. Vincent testified before the Commission that the average increase in production per man per day in all the mines of the Rocky Mountain Fuel Company between March, 1928, and March, 1929, was 2.7 tons. "We find this increased efficiency and morale extending through the entire organization. While the men are paid for work at contract rates, which has increased their earnings, costs have not increased, but have shown a decrease, due in part to more efficient work and better coöperation."

MRS. THOMAS A. MCGOLDRICK, a Catholic and chairman of the motion-picture department of the International Federation of Catholic Alumnae, made an amazing speech in New York a few days ago. She boasted that through the efforts of her organization, a talking motion picture made by Mrs. Margaret Sanger, and dealing with the social importance of birth control, had been suppressed. According to reports in *The New York World* and *The Herald Tribune*, Mrs. McGoldrick said in her speech:

When Mrs. Margaret Sanger made her talk on birth control through Fox Movietone I called on them and said that Mrs. Sanger had to come off. I was told that they had put her on, not because they approved of what she said, but because she was news. They said to me, "We'll put you on next week to answer if you like." I said I would do nothing of the kind.

However, within the week the picture went to the wall and has not since emerged.

There seems some reason to believe that Mrs. McGoldrick's last statement is false; the Fox Movietone editor says that, as far as he knows, the picture was not suppressed; but successful or not, her action seems to us as outrageous as her tone was fatuously complacent. What she attempted was sheer brutal censorship, trying to decide in advance for the whole motion-picture-going public, Catholic and Protestant alike, what it should and should not see. The Catholics, who constitute a minority of the people of the United States, ought to be the last to demand a censorship of this sort, since they would be the first to suffer if the principle were generally applied. We cannot believe that Mrs. McGoldrick's attitude has the support of the liberal members of her Church. We should like to know, and will be glad to publish, the views on this matter of such individuals. What do the editors of *The Commonwealth* think of it, or Professor Hayes of Columbia, or Dr. John A. Ryan?

THE United States Customs Service got itself into the news twice in the same day last week. The first item announced that it had confiscated a copy of "Rabelais" imported from England by that Philadelphia expert in the arts of book-collecting, authorship and fine living, A. Edward Newton—confiscated it, of course, on the ground of obscenity. It hardly needs to be said that "Rabelais" can be purchased without difficulty at a moment's notice in most good bookstores, and can be found in a majority of the country's public libraries. The second announcement told how customs officers had seized all the souvenirs collected by the crew of the S. S. "Belgenland" in the course of a world tour, just completed. These trinkets which the sailors had bought were tossed into a trunk, without any identifying tags, and taken to the Customs House. Then they were taken back to the ship and dumped in a heap on the deck, when most of the crew were on

shore leave and unable to claim them. Some of these souvenirs are missing, and some were smashed through the customs men's tender care. We have commented before, in restrained language, on the actions of the customs service, particularly in relation to censorship, and we propose now to use plainer speech. The first of these actions, we submit, was that of a fool, and the second, that of a group of savages. We do not see how any American can contemplate them without being ashamed.

THE problem of transition from economically untenable positions in petty trade to productive work in industry and agriculture has for centuries confronted the vast number of Jews in eastern Europe. Rejected from vocational schools and guild organizations, subject to legal and social disqualifications, it remained for the Jews themselves to ally in an effort towards readjustment and a more systematic distribution of callings. The organization created for this purpose, in the second half of the last century, was known as the "Society for the Promotion of Trades and Agriculture," or, from its Russian initials, the "Ort," which in time extended from its headquarters in Berlin to over ninety branches in a dozen countries. By 1914, progress had been such that over half the total Jewish population of eastern Europe was engaged in productive labor, when the cataclysm of the War effaced this achievement at a blow. The problem of fifty years before reappeared with greater intensity, and the solution, as before, rested in such reconstruction work as the "Ort" has undertaken. The purpose of this work is three-fold: to supply artisans with necessary implements and materials for their work, to establish trade schools and workshops, and to encourage prospective farmers by extending credit for the purchase of land and equipment. With the intention of doubling its scope of activity in 1929, the organization is soliciting aggregate funds of one million dollars from contributors in the United States, through the office of its National Secretary, at 122 East Forty-second Street, New York.

Who Should Own Newspapers?

THE Federal Trade Commission, when it started to investigate the purchase of the Boston Herald and the Boston Traveler by the International Paper and Power Company, found it had hold of the tail of a very long snake. Within a few days it unearthed the fact that this half-billion-dollar corporation, which is much the largest manufacturer of newsprint, although three-fifths of its assets are devoted to the electric power industry, had been buying into newspapers in a wholesale way. It had spent at least \$10,000,000, which gave it either control or at least a powerful voice in the affairs of thirteen newspapers. These included, in

addition to the two in Boston, the Chicago Journal and the Chicago Daily News, a Georgia paper, the Augusta Chronicle, two in South Carolina, the Columbia Record and the Spartansburg Herald Journal, the Greensboro, N. C., Record, the Tampa, Fla., Tribune, and four papers of the Frank E. Gannett chain in New York State—the Brooklyn Daily Eagle, the Albany Knickerbocker Press and Evening News, and the Ithaca Journal-News. Gossip in publishing circles had been that the I. P. and P. had intended to spend at least a hundred million dollars, and perhaps two hundred million, on additional investments of the same character, and Mr. A. R. Graustein, president of the corporation, admitted on the witness stand that his company had tried to buy into at least three other newspapers—the Cleveland Plain Dealer, Il Progresso of New York, and an unnamed third.

Mr. Graustein insists that the I. P. and P. has purchased its shares in newspapers without any intention to control their editorial policies. The sole purpose of the corporation has been, he says, to insure an outlet for its newsprint. Even if this explanation be accepted at its face value, it is based on a ridiculous assumption, one which, we are glad to note, has been so regarded by practically the whole press of America. The news of these purchases was kept secret from the public as long as it could be, but it could not have been withheld more than briefly from the responsible editors and the editorial writers. Once they knew it, it could not fail to influence them. No matter how hard Mr. Graustein and the editors both tried to lean over backward in their efforts to be strictly independent of one another, there would be an adjustment of view on the part of the subordinates to the master. Freedom is not free when it has to be maintained by a powerful effort of the will. Realization of this fact undoubtedly lay behind much of the spontaneous nation-wide criticism, which was powerful enough to cause Mr. Gannett, within a few days' time, to buy back the International's share in his four papers, with funds from an unnamed source.

But is Mr. Graustein's assurance to be taken as completely valid? We have learned in the last six months, through the Federal Trade Commission's inquiry, how much the public-utility interests are afraid of the gospel of public ownership, and to what extraordinary lengths they have gone in spending money to combat it—or rather, to buy up possible advocates in schools and newspaper offices, and to present through the press and otherwise a distorted, perjured view of the facts. The I. P. and P. is a power company, and a big one; Mr. Graustein admits that its power assets are worth \$300,000,000, and it is recognized as one of the leading electric corporations of New England, where its activities are strongly centered. Suppose that in Massachusetts, for example, a bill were introduced into the state legislature which the power people regarded as violently inimical to their own interests. Suppose the editors of The Herald and The Trav-

eler, in Boston, felt that conscientious devotion to the public interest required them to support this measure. Is anyone quixotic enough to imagine that Mr. Graustein and his company would allow such a situation to continue?

There would, of course, be no suggestion of dictation, of censorship by a minority owner. Not at all! What would happen would be that the recalcitrant editor would be taken to lunch. He would have arguments with the soup, expostulations with the salad and genial good fellowship with the coffee. It is a hundred to one that he would "see a new light," would "find himself in possession of important new information." The paper might not alter its stand all at once: perhaps the fire would merely be banked a little at first, but it is absurd to imagine that it would be allowed to burn unchecked. If Mr. Graustein were foolish enough to keep hands off, he would probably imperil his own position, since a majority of his powerful stockholders, like all others, certainly care nothing for the freedom of the press and care enormously about their own pocketbooks.

The uproar which this incident has created is a welcome sign that the press itself has an uneasy conscience in this regard; but it also points to the lack of any definite social doctrine as to this whole vitally important subject of the ownership of newspapers. As things are now, anybody may buy a daily paper or a chain of them, for any purpose that he pleases. In Europe such purchases are often political; in the United States they have in the past been actuated chiefly by the desire to make money. Some of our publishers boast that their papers keep aloof from partisanship in politics, and from the discussion of controversial subjects, as though there were a merit in the abdication of one of the chief responsibilities of the press; others, like Mr. Gannett, own Republican and Democratic newspapers side by side and seem unconscious of the utter absurdity of such a situation. The public seems hardly at all concerned to know who owns the papers it reads, or in what intellectual and moral atmosphere they are produced. A prosaic business man like Mr. Gannett, a genius in sensationalism like Mr. Hearst, a public-utility king like Mr. Graustein, may buy a score of papers—there is nothing to prevent its being a hundred—and use them to support any policy, ranging from war in Mexico or Japan to giving away Muscle Shoals. No one is in a position to influence this development unless, of course, the owner departs so far from popular opinion on some issue that his readers desert him—something which is most unlikely. The popular theory that a paper which is bought by a big corporation withers away is not supported by the evidence. Everything depends on the corporation, and on the editors it hires.

It is easy to say that this problem should be met by legislation, but we are by no means sure that such is the case. Ownership and influence are comparatively easy to conceal and hard to unearth:

the I. P. and P. took no particular pains to cover its tracks, because its heads apparently did not realize what a storm of criticism their action would draw down upon them. Certainly, government ownership of the press is no solution, governments being what they now are. The safest line of attack is the development of public realization of the importance of the question—the ironical fact being that this consciousness ought to be created through the medium of the very press whose morals are in question. Hard though it may be for our radical friends to believe, even the big public-utility corporations have among their officers a few men of social intelligence and responsibility; and there is reason to think that some of these have been shocked and dismayed to learn how far their industry has gone in seeking to poison the sources of opinion in the press and the school-room.

Journalism which is operated by business men primarily for business profits is always a makeshift, whose pretenses to devoted public service must have a hollow ring; yet it is clear that there are certain types of capitalists who are less obnoxious as owners than others, and that there are certain forms of management which permit an increased degree of editorial responsibility. One of these is vesting control in a committee of public-spirited men, as was done with the London Times. Old-age pension systems which increase the economic security of editors are also useful in liberating them from the pressure to obey a dishonorable employer or to support his views when the journalist believes them to be wrong. This question is one which might be studied by one of the great research foundations which have so multiplied of late, and which are embarrassed to know what to do with their money, or by such a body as the American Society of Newspaper Editors. In the meantime, Mr. Graustein and his associates may prove, however unwittingly and reluctantly, to have performed a distinct public service by calling attention in a dramatic way to a situation which has long existed.

Our Step-Child, Cuba

ONCE AGAIN, Cuba has leaped into the newspapers. Its current fame is not due to cane sugar, Bacardi cocktails or winter tourists. It is due to local dictatorship which is as ruthless as Mussolini's, but which lacks Mussolini's brains. The workings of this dictatorship, which were reported in detail in *The New Republic* a year ago, have again been brought to public attention by a series of articles published by *The New York World*, and by a dispassionate study, "Cuba and the Platt Amendment," published by the Foreign Policy Association.

President Gerardo Machado was first elected President of Cuba in the fall of 1924. He was a "business man in politics" who promised to lift Cuba out of its economic depression and make it

safe for Wall Street investments. But, despite two sugar-crop restriction laws, President Machado—probably through no fault of his own—found he could do nothing about the economic depression; and as the end of his first term approached he pleaded for more time in which to carry out his reforms. The difficulty was, however, that he had been elected on a one-term platform.

In the spring of 1927, the Cuban Congress, controlled by him, adopted constitutional reforms extending Machado's present term by two years. In April, 1928, a constitutional convention was held to approve these reforms. Instead of extending his term two years, the convention unanimously adopted the principle of a single six-year term for the presidency, but declared that it would not apply to Machado. In November, 1928, he was reelected without opposition. On May 20, Machado will begin his second term. Instead of retiring in 1929, as he had promised, he now intends to serve until 1935. Political observers, remembering Cuba's history, are asking whether a revolution will be started once Machado begins his second term.

Although all the organized political parties in Cuba supported the constitutional "reforms" and the reelection of Machado, the Union Nacionalista, led by Colonel Mendieta, Cosme de la Torriente, and Roberto Peñate, vigorously opposed the reelection on the ground that it was illegal and would prove the beginning of a prolonged dictatorship. It is charged that the Cuban Congress is subservient to Machado's will because of the government lottery. The government periodically issues, through the agency of about 2,000 collectorships, thousands of lottery tickets. Although the legal price of each ticket is \$20, the collector sells them at an advance—sometimes as high as \$30—and pockets the difference. The President controls the assignment of these collectorships to Congressmen and Senators, and thus has at his disposal a huge slush fund. In Cuba, votes may be bought on the grand scale.

Secondly, it is charged that the government has prohibited the organization of independent parties and has used violent means in ridding itself of opposition. In 1919, General Enoch Crowder went to Havana to assist in drawing up an electoral code, the purpose of which was to secure fair registration and elections, and to prevent the political parties from falling into the hands of professional cliques, anxious merely to obtain power. It is charged that by a series of laws the Cuban Congress has emasculated the Crowder Code of its guarantees, that today the three organized parties are out of touch with popular feeling and that they are controlled by a group of time-serving politicians who find it profitable to obey Machado's will. Thus, the Union Nacionalista found it impossible to run candidates for the constitutional convention or for the presidency; and when they attempted to hold meetings in 1927 to protest against the reforms, their meetings were ruthlessly broken up by the police. In the spring of 1927 the gov-

ernment closed the university and deported some students because of their protests against the reforms. While the government's most distinguished opponents are unharmed, there is a long list of more obscure editors and politicians who have either been assassinated or have disappeared mysteriously after arousing Machado's wrath. About two months ago the government made wholesale arrests of people accused of "insidious propaganda."

If the peoples of Russia, Italy, Venezuela, Cuba or any other country wish to be governed by a dictatorship, it is of no concern to the United States. But if they wish to rid themselves of a dictatorship, the United States has no ethical or legal right to prevent them from doing so. So far as Cuba is concerned, however, the situation is complicated by the Platt Amendment. Under the permanent treaty of 1903, which embodied this amendment, the United States has a standing right to intervene in Cuba for the purpose of maintaining a "government adequate for the protection of life, property and individual liberty."

The Foreign Policy Association's report reveals that Cuba accepted the Platt Amendment subject to an interpretation made by Secretary of War Elihu Root to the effect that the United States would intervene only "to protect the independence of the Cuban Republic from foreign attack, or when a veritable state of anarchy exists within the republic." The subsequent history of the Platt Amendment shows, however, that the United States has frequently departed from the Root interpretation. Secretary of State Philander C. Knox was perhaps the greatest offender. He devised the famous "preventive intervention" policy under which the United States protested against legislation that might subsequently prove injurious to foreign interests, and against any conditions that in the future might threaten the stability of the government. Another aspect of the "preventive" policy was applied by General Crowder between 1921 and 1923, when as personal representative of the President of the United States he attempted to bring about the reform of the Cuban administration.

While the interpretation of the Platt Amendment has varied in certain details, the United States has consistently opposed revolution in Cuba. It has interpreted the Amendment as a guarantee of the government in power as long as that government protected foreign property. In a note of August, 1920, the United States informed Cuba that it was "opposed unalterably to any attempt which may be made to replace by violence or revolution the process of government." Yet there have been five revolutions or attempts at revolution in Cuba since 1906, and if the present system of misrule continues, another revolution is inevitable sooner or later. When this revolution occurs, will the United States, reiterating Secretary Lansing's dictum in 1917 that revolution is a "lawless and unconstitutional act," rush troops to Havana to

bolster up Machado's authority? Already Machado is using the Platt Amendment in support of his position. He justified the suppression of a railway strike in 1925 on the ground that American concerns in Cuba had appealed to Washington for intervention. In a speech at Santa Clara in December, 1927, he even intimated that the State Department desired that he remain President for life! According to a recent statement of the Union Nacionalista, Machado is boasting that what he has done has had "the enthusiastic approval of the government of the United States."

Obviously, this is an intolerable situation. The United States cannot underwrite abuse in Cuba without forfeiting every principle upon which this country was founded and is supposed to rest today. We must not forget that under the Platt Amendment the United States guarantees a government capable of protecting not only property, but individual liberty. If we deny the people of Cuba the right to revolt, we have a duty to see to it that the constituted government in Cuba rests upon a really popular basis. Mr. Stimson recognized this principle in Nicaragua in the spring of 1927 when, in suppressing the revolution, he promised that the United States would supervise the elections. He is confronted with a similar situation in Cuba today.

There are several choices for the State Department to follow. It can simply do nothing until a revolution in Cuba is attempted. Then it can land troops, restore order, and insist upon a supervised election. Such a policy would be satisfactory to the Union Nacionalista and would probably mean the downfall of Machado. But it would mean the definite interference of the United States in Cuban affairs. Secondly, the State Department might at once send a note to Machado, informing him that he will not be recognized by the United States after his first term ends unless he calls a new and fair election, perhaps to be held under outside supervision. Such a note might force Machado to abdicate, but it would be another example of "meddling," however humanitarian in nature, that would arouse resentment in Cuba and throughout Latin America.

Finally, the Platt Amendment might be terminated altogether and the Cuban people informed that if they wish to correct internal abuse, if need be by force, they may do so, so far as the United States is concerned—after the manner of the American Revolution and the American Civil War. Perhaps this last alternative is a counsel of perfection. The New Republic realizes that in this hard-headed, cynical age the United States has taken the lead in demanding that the tiny states place foreign above domestic interests. But the fact that the ideal solution is remote should not blind us to its advantages, nor keep our eyes from the goal. That goal should be the same law for the weak as for the strong. If, for police purposes, it is deemed necessary to interfere in the internal affairs of another country, such interference should take place

only by virtue of international authority, and not by the fiat of a single power.

More Light on Electricity Cost

ALL THOSE householders who buy electricity from privately owned power companies will be interested in the following statements by Mr. Morris Llewellyn Cooke, eminent management engineer and expert on public utilities: "five cents per kilowatt-hour must be considered as a fully adequate *top rate* for domestic current except in sparsely settled territory or for short season service or under other exceptional conditions." "A four-cent rate would be quite generally applicable and in many instances would even then include too high a margin of profit."

These statements are from an open letter to the public service commissions, entitled "On the Cost of Distribution of Electricity to Domestic Consumers." In a previous pamphlet, "What Price Electricity for Our Homes?" Mr. Cooke had called attention to the very low and rapidly decreasing cost of generating electricity, and had recommended much lower rates to domestic consumers as a means of encouraging the use of labor-saving devices in the home. The stock reply of the utilities to this argument has been that the unit cost of generating electricity is so small anyway that it is hardly a factor to be considered; what counts is the cost of distributing it. The enormous differential between what is charged industry for current and what is charged family users is due, according to this argument, to the cost of getting it in small quantities to the individual consumer. Mr. Cooke had dealt with distribution cost as best he could in his former study, but he was handicapped by the strange fact that most of the very companies who talk of high distribution cost do not keep their books so that this cost can be readily discovered—or at least do not publish the figures. What, as Mr. Cooke says, in any ordinary establishment is a very simple problem, becomes in this instance a highly complex one. Nevertheless, he has now been able to obtain figures which are, in general, conclusive. They were derived from "personal examination of sworn annual returns of a large number of publicly and privately owned utilities on file in the offices of public service commissions and from available official reports of privately owned plants." The plants are in ten different states, and are fairly representative.

While it is impracticable to summarize the technical details of this new study, some of its major conclusions may be outlined. In the first place, in a modern utility, generation and transmission—which are the same for both large and small users—absorb about 65 percent of the annual costs: street lighting takes 5 percent; and only the remaining 30 percent is attributable to distribution and direct consumer costs. Of this amount, three-quarters are due to the charges on the fixed investment in wires,

poles, meters, transformers, etc. About one-third of the amount assignable to individual consumers is on, or within view of, the consumer's premises. The cost of distribution per small consumer, which may be considered in the nature of a flat or fixed charge, is found to be only about \$7.50 a year. The larger power consumers, who require more expensive equipment, are responsible for an annual cost many times greater. The cost of distribution to a small consumer, who uses about 500 kilowatt-hours per year, works out at 1.5 cents per kilowatt-hour. Certainly not a great expense!

It is true, of course, that as the consumption of the individual user increases, the cost of distribution per kilowatt-hour falls, for the same equipment is capable of carrying considerably more current. If average consumption could be increased to the figures prevailing under the publicly owned system in Ontario, the cost of distribution would become three-quarters of a cent per kilowatt-hour. In Ontario the average amount paid by domestic consumers in 1927 was only 2.06 cents per kilowatt-hour—and this covered all costs of generating, transmitting and distributing the current as well as general expenses.

A typical modern utility, using mass production methods, can under average conditions generate and deliver current to the bus bars or principal substations at from less than a cent to a cent and one-quarter per kilowatt-hour. This does not assume cheap water power, but coal-burning plants. Adding in losses of current in distribution, distributive cost, cost of handling the consumer's account, and a reasonable share of general costs, and assuming that the average consumer does not use over 500 kilowatt-hours per year, the normal total cost is between 3.9 and 4.5 cents per kilowatt-hour. The rest of what most of us pay goes either for profit, or possibly for subsidizing large power users who get their current at a price below the real cost of furnishing it to them.

A good part of Mr. Cooke's pamphlet is devoted to exposing the confused and illogical way in which most utility accounts are kept. This is the reason that facts like the above have not become known before and have not led to lower rates. In reports to some commissions, investment in transmission is not separated from investment in distribution, and operating costs for both categories are lumped together. Also there is confusion of the statements of revenue received from, and current delivered to, domestic and commercial users. Some companies even lump the large power sales together with the small lighting ones. The fault is partly due to the requirements of the regulating commissions, partly due to lack of adequate funds to supervise accounting, and partly results from mergers and consolidations. A prime necessity is for the commissions to undertake a thorough reformation of the companies' book-keeping, in accordance with modern cost-accounting methods.

One would have thought that a great industry of

this type, with ample resources, rapid technical advance, and able counsel of all kinds, would have undertaken good cost-finding on its own initiative. The reason it has not done so is undoubtedly that it has no intention of charging the various classes of consumers according to the cost of service, but solely according to what the traffic will bear. Striking confirmation of this view is contained in a quotation by Mr. Cooke from a publication of the Harvard Business School by Professor Philip Cabot, marked "Confidential—For Private Distribution Only." In Mr. Cabot's analysis of the business of the Hartford Electric Company, he writes, "Each service must be priced according to its market value. . . . Idealists have their place, but it is not here. The use of averages, theoretical allocations of costs and dogmas about how things ought to be and what customers ought to want, are ghost dances which exhaust but do not enlighten."

The "market value" of electric current is essentially "what the traffic will bear." Long ago, in the case of the railroads, it was recognized that charges based on any such principle are totally inconsistent with the aims of regulation. The public is supposed to pay, in the case of a monopolized utility, not the utmost that the company can under the circumstances extract from it, but the cost of the service plus a reasonable return on the investment. That a professor in a business school which is supposed, by its supporters, to inculcate more scientific management and professional standards of administration, should endorse such a discredited principle in the realm of public utilities, is a telling piece of evidence of the present low estate of utility regulation. If the commissions do not bring about modern accounting and the fixing of rates on a scientific and reasonable basis, the public has cause to undertake the job of supplying itself with electricity, without the intervention of private ownership. If, after achieving knowledge and control of the situation, the public should decide on a policy of subsidizing large power consumers at the expense of homes, it would have a right to do so. But at least it would not also contribute exorbitant profits, to be absorbed by mergers and promoters of mergers.

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Sea Law under the Kellogg Pact

CONGRESS at its last session light-heartedly adopted an amendment to the Cruiser Bill, sponsored by Senators Borah and Reed, advocating the negotiation of treaties regulating the conduct at sea of belligerents and neutrals in war, upon the basis of "the inviolability of private property." This resurrection of the "neutral rights" issue, which is of practical importance only after the outbreak of war, seems out of place at a time when all nations are solemnly "renouncing" war. The realists tell us, however, that we are still to have plenty of wars of "self-defense." And the thesis of the sea-law amendment is that the United States should have the unrestricted right to trade with all future belligerents.

Congress apparently wishes to prevent a repetition of the events between 1914 and 1917, when American goods destined for belligerent consumption were subject to repeated interferences by British men-of-war. The British fleet meddled with our commerce in the name of "international law." But it was international law applied by British prize courts and British Orders in Council, to meet belligerent rather than neutral interests. Rules of contraband and blockade, and of search and seizure, were constantly modified to meet new conditions and to suit British needs. These modifications met the vigorous and repeated protests of the United States.

Nevertheless, anyone who looks into the subject will learn that the British did not violate any universally accepted rules of international law. While an attempt was made, in the Declaration of London of 1909, to codify the principles of maritime warfare, that declaration was not ratified, and was not therefore binding in 1914. The conflict between the United States and Great Britain has not been over the observance of law; it has been a conflict of interests. In fact, when the United States has become a belligerent, it has usually adopted the rules of warfare which it had condemned as a neutral. Thus, in the Civil War, we applied the doctrine of "continuous voyage," and upon entering the World War in 1917, we adopted the system of blacklists, the validity of which we had challenged as a neutral.

Granting that this question is one of conflicting interests, we are told that, between 1914 and 1917, the United States was not able to defend its commerce against British seizures simply because it did not have a navy that could cope with the British fleet. Hence: build a fleet strong enough to protect our commerce from British interference in the future, or hold a conference and ask Great Britain to promise not to touch our commerce. Such is the

reasoning which is behind the sea-law amendment.

Publicists, not only in America but also in England, have encouraged this reasoning by stating that it is to the advantage of Great Britain to do away with blockade. In the past, Britain could effectively apply blockade against her enemies and yet protect herself from the same weapon in other hands because of the overwhelming supremacy of the British fleet. Today this supremacy is challenged by the American navy and French submarines and aircraft. An island dependent upon outside markets for its daily bread, England will be in danger in the next war of being snuffed out by blockade, and would therefore profit by its abolition, and the acceptance of the American principle of "inviolability of private property."

Attractive as this reasoning is, it is well to consider the difficulties inherent in any attempt to secure a sea-law agreement.

The Congress of the United States has declared that such an agreement should provide for the "inviolability of private property." If literally construed, this phrase would mean that no belligerent could seize any private property upon the high seas even if destined for direct and immediate enemy use. The acceptance of this principle would mean that the United States could export munitions and other materials to Germany, or any other continental power, without fear of seizure by a belligerent navy. The Borah-Reed amendment thus favors the abolition of the law of contraband and of blockade.

Is it probable that any naval power would consent to an agreement that would thus strengthen a nation whose military power lies on the land? The World War demonstrated that modern navies do not intend to fight each other: they exist for purposes of blockade. Even if the British government should agree to abolish the right of seizure, is it conceivable that France would waive the right, in case of war, to blockade England by submarine and aircraft? The refusal of France to ratify the Washington submarine treaty shows what her position would be. Would the American navy, which is now one of the two strongest navies in the world, agree to abolish the right of seizure which it could exercise with powerful effect? No government ratified the Declaration of London simply because it went too far in extending neutral rights. But that Declaration, in retaining the principle of contraband and blockade, did not go nearly so far as the Borah-Reed amendment.

Judged by its terminology, the Borah-Reed amendment is based on the belief that the status of war in this year of grace, 1929, is exactly the same as it was in 1914. In the old days, war was a legal

institution; at least, it was not illegal. Neutral states could not favor one belligerent over another; they could not inquire into the merits of the controversy and declare one state to be "right" and the other "wrong."

During the last ten years, the status of war has profoundly changed. The first blow at war's "legality" was dealt by the League Covenant. Members of the League have accepted the obligation to submit their disputes to pacific procedure, and not to go to war in case the Council makes a unanimous recommendation which one party accepts. In case a state illegally goes to war under the Covenant, the other members are obliged to apply an economic blockade. No member of the League may claim the right to trade with a recognized aggressor. Nevertheless, in case the Council does not make a unanimous recommendation, and in a few other instances, war remains "legal." This constitutes the famous "Gap" in the Covenant.

A second blow at the "legality" of war was dealt by the anti-war pact. This agreement makes all war, as an instrument of national policy, illegal; in theory it closes the Gap in the Covenant. What is more important, under the anti-war pact the United States assumes an obligation not to go to war, which League members in another and perhaps more limited form have already assumed.

Both the League Covenant and the anti-war pact have fundamentally altered the pre-war status of neutrality. If State A suddenly and without provocation attacks State B, a clear violation of the Covenant and the anti-war pact will have occurred. League members would then be obliged to impose an economic blockade against State A as a means of bringing the illegal war to an immediate end. Warships, acting under the authority of the League, would be obliged to intercept American and other merchantmen bound for State A, and thus, American trade would inevitably be affected. Under such circumstances, can the United States insist upon the "inviolability of private property"? The answer would seem to be obvious. Should the United States insist upon providing State A with munitions or other materials as necessary to the prosecution of war as munitions—and these include practically all materials of trade—it would become an accomplice of the aggressor. Our country may be "materialistic," but is doubtful whether we will ever go so far as to say openly that, while in theory we are opposed to war, we must make as much money as possible out of it whenever war takes place. By the very nature of things, the United States cannot insist upon an unqualified right to trade with a state that has flagrantly violated the anti-war pact. Nor could any League member grant us such a right, in a sea-law agreement, without violating its obligations under the Covenant.

In negotiating an international agreement in regard to sea law, the United States would probably

be obliged to accept explicitly this principle of non-interference with League sanctions, which has already been accepted implicitly in the anti-war pact. But is the Senate ready explicitly to acknowledge this principle? Judged by the Borah-Reed amendment, the answer is no. If a sea-law agreement is to accomplish anything more than the anti-war pact has done, it must work out some international means for defining the aggressor. As far as most states are concerned, a recommendation in regard to the aggressor may be made by the League Council. A sea-law agreement might possibly provide that the United States would respect a League blockade in wars where the League Council makes a recommendation that is unanimous, except for the parties concerned, as to which state is the aggressor. In return, the members of the League might accept the principle of the "inviolability of private property" in the case of wars where the Council is not unanimous. Thus, if States A and B go to war, and the Council declares State A to be the aggressor, Americans could not trade with State A, but they could trade freely with State B. But if the Council is not unanimous as to whether State A or State B is the aggressor, the League members should agree not to apply an economic blockade against either state, but to accept the American principle of freedom of the seas.

Nevertheless, the United States is not a member of the Council and it is not likely to recognize its jurisdiction, even in the case of unanimity, until it has the same right of veto that Council members enjoy. A sea-law agreement would thus abruptly confront the United States with the problem of participating in the League Council. In its present temper the Senate, and American opinion generally, are in no mood to accept any formal arrangement to this effect. So far, we have shied away from any kind of League machinery. Our delegates induced a League Conference to drop a provision in the arms-traffic convention, establishing an international arms board. Our government has declined to participate in setting up a League Narcotic Control Board; so far we have declined to sit on the Council for the purpose of electing World Court judges. Until we can learn to coöperate with the League in these relatively harmless matters, it is difficult to see how we can agree in advance to coöperate with the Council in vital matters affecting our interests in time of war.

It should be admitted, however, that in determining an aggressor, the Council, which has fourteen members, will seldom be unanimous except in the case of minor controversies. France now has two of her allies, Poland and Rumania, on the Council, and any one of these three states can prevent unanimity when the interests of another are threatened. It is also important to remember that, under the existing interpretation of the Covenant, the Council, even if unanimous, has no power to bind the fifty-five members of the League. In a resolution

interpreting Article Sixteen, the Second Assembly declared that the Council had the power merely of recommendation, and that each member decided for itself whether a state had violated its obligations and the extent of sanctions, if any, to be applied. We may therefore have a situation in which a unanimous Council has declared a state to be an aggressor; but in which only ten states apply a blockade. The remaining members of the League may even declare that the state is not the aggressor and insist upon the right of trade. Obviously, there are the elements of a conflict in this situation. In other words, the principal reason why it is difficult now to determine the aggressor in a given case is because of the unsatisfactory and transitional state of international procedure and international law. Sooner or later, machinery will be developed to give a definitive and conclusive judgment upon each international dispute.

It will be impossible to secure the acceptance of the American principle of the inviolability of private property in the case of public wars; and it is doubtful whether the acceptance of this principle is desirable even in the case of private wars, because the difference between public and private wars, unless crystallized by such an agreement, will gradually pass away. In the past, moreover, agreements attempting to make war more respectable have usually been violated by belligerents when it was to their interest to do so, and there is no reason to believe that a self-abnegation agreement, abolishing blockade in private war, would be any more observed than an agreement not to use poison gas.

The real problem is how to bring about the coöperation of the United States in preventing any state from violating the anti-war pact. The first step in this direction—a step envisaged by the Capper resolution—is to accept the passive obligation not to interfere with an economic blockade imposed against an aggressor by other states. The Capper resolution goes further than this, in that it authorizes the President to impose an arms embargo against the aggressor. The difficulty with such a proposal is that it places the great responsibility of determining the aggressor upon the President. While undoubtedly he would consult with the League Council in making a decision, it is doubtful whether Congress would confer this power upon him until it is willing to accept the ruling of an international tribunal upon the aggressor question.

For the moment, all that is needed is a general declaration by the United States that it will not interfere with sanctions against the aggressor, leaving to the international organization of the future the question of defining the aggressor. The danger in attempting to secure a congressional declaration in regard to sanctions is that it would give an opportunity for Congressmen to stage an anti-League debate, which would not only defeat the resolution, but actually check the growing coöperation in peacetime activities between the League and the United

States. In return for such a declaration by the United States, members of the League, especially Great Britain, might make a declaration to the effect that their navies will never be used to interfere with the commerce of other countries except when acting under international authority, *i. e.*, the League of Nations. Once a series of such declarations were made, President Wilson's Point II would be realized: "absolute freedom of navigation upon the seas, outside territorial waters, alike in peace and in war, except as the seas may be closed in whole or in part by international action for the enforcement of international covenants."

While it is important to remove the fears that the United States will interfere with the application of League sanctions in the future, surely the best means of preventing war is not in punitive machinery but in preventive measures of a conciliatory, consultative character. The United States learned the value of this type of machinery when, a few months ago, the Pan-American Arbitration Conference, acting jointly with the League Council, stopped a war between Bolivia and Paraguay. Despite this incident, the United States still remains aloof from any form of organized and continuous conciliatory machinery. If the United States should agree to consult with members of the League, if the United States should agree to throw the weight of its prestige on the side of the League Council in causing states to find a pacific settlement of their differences, it is doubtful whether war would take place, and whether the contingencies envisaged in this sea-law controversy would arise. This form of consultation between the United States and the League could take place without the United States becoming a member of the League. It could take place without committing the United States to any form of action, joint or otherwise, against an aggressor. Consultation with a view to the prevention of war will protect American commercial interests more effectively than belated efforts to protect these interests after war breaks out.

RAYMOND LESLIE BUELL.

The Tree Wants Water

This hollow out of space, this emptiness
That represents my person, colors me
With foul black knot or green translucency
According as I pass or take the press
Of evil spores and weathers warped and fierce.
Nothing can be avoided till it is gone.
The tree lives as the earth and air have done.
To emptiness no points but rains can pierce.
O gift of full rock and of saturate drift,
Difference is happy only in differing.
Between the fruit of mind and the tree's foot
The substance, altering as the blood's lights shift,
Is insufficient for itself. O bring
Rain from your tilted heart to drench its root.

RAYMOND HOLDEN.

"Moonshine" on the Mississippi

NOWHERE do birds celebrate spring with sweeter ecstasy than in a grove bordering a Mississippi slough. I made this discovery one glorious morning, when I arrived with my family to inhabit a little cottage embosomed in a grove of locust trees. Grosbeaks, orioles and robins appeared to be engaged in a melodious conspiracy to impress upon us the ideal nesting facilities of the neighborhood, and the delights of "green thoughts in a green shade."

"How lovely!" exclaimed my wife. "Now we shall be among a simple and unsophisticated folk whose wholesome lives will be an example for both of us. I adore people close to the soil. They are so sincere and have such a grip on the homely truth of life."

I was no less enchanted. The evil sophistication of the city, its memories of feverish social rivalries, sordid commercialism and bootleggers seemed to fall from me like Pilgrim's pack.

"Yes," I agreed, "we shall soon observe Baucis and Philemon at close range."

A few days later one of our bucolic neighbors came to do some little chore. As he ambled up the knoll, the gentle morning zephyr bore, as announcement of his coming, a strangely familiar aroma. Its impropriety troubled me. This was not the scent of horses and cattle, fat soil and lush clover. No pastoral quality was in it. Rather I was uneasily reminded of the evil city which we had deserted for the simplicity and virtues of a rural retreat.

I glanced at my wife, who had joined me. In her eyes was a shadow of pain and suspicion.

"Can that be the odor of liquor?" she whispered.

"You are too quick with your suspicions," I chided. "Remember we are among a people of almost Puritan rigidity, who are responsible for state dry laws which rank with the severest. Our neighbors belong to that sturdy yeomanry which is our bulwark against the corruptive influence of the cities. Our good neighbor has been slopping his hogs, and carries the aroma of the sty."

The countryman bade us a cheery good morning from the midst of his aura of mash, while I, no longer able to keep a straight face, fled to my boat and fishing tackle.

My objective was one of the dams thrown between two islands to divert water to the main channel. I had not rowed far before I lost my way among the labyrinthine channels. Seeing what appeared to be a well used path which entered the rushes at the edge of an island, and a boat tied up near it, I disembarked in search of the owner of the boat, who doubtless could direct me on my way.

Suddenly I was confronted by a yokel who exhibited mingled embarrassment and hostility. His aroma was precisely that of my honest neighbor. It did not require the acumen of a Sherlock Holmes to deduce that I was in the vicinity of a "moonshine" distillery. I hastily inquired my way to the dam and tactfully made my adieux.

Reaching the island I sought, I drew the boat ashore some distance from the dam, as the walk across a peninsula appeared to involve less labor than rowing around it. After penetrating a way into the thick underbrush, I emerged in a small clearing occupied by a structure of rough-hewn planks. No one replied to my prudent hail. The door was locked, but peering through a window I discerned the outlines of a still and barrels for mash. A few feet from the cabin an iron pipe was sunk in the ground. Attached to the pipe was a pump to supply water for mixing mash.

"Baucis and Philemon," I chuckled, "have acquired a new kind of inexhaustible pitcher."

Returning late that evening, as the horned owls began to flit among the trees, I heard the sound of oars, and presently was abreast of a boat occupied by a young man and young woman. I recognized them as man and wife, who lived across the road from our cottage. The young woman was perched on a pile of plump sacks, and eyed me askance as the boat swept past, propelled by the powerful strokes of her husband. He gave me an abrupt salutation. As the craft forged ahead, it left not only a foamy wake, but a trail of scent I had encountered thrice that day.

I rowed to my landing in a meditative mood, and found my wife somewhat preoccupied. I ventured no pleasant sallies about Baucis and Philemon or sweet rural innocence. In her eyes I detected a smouldering gleam which boded ill to jesters.

As the days passed I established friendly terms with my neighbors. When they came to know I was a harmless fisherman, unconcerned with enforcement of the Volstead Act, they went about their avocation with little effort at concealment.

Sam and his wife, Lucy, whom I had encountered in the boat, used a landing adjacent to mine. There they loaded sacks of corn, sugar and rye for transportation to Sam's island still, the girl doing a man's labor. Frequent contact with them led to an invitation to visit the still, and, while hobnobbing with Sam over some of his bourbon, a special distillation aged in the wood for six months, I learned his story.

He was in the army during the World War, and while encamped near Louisville, Kentucky, met the daughter of a former mountain moonshiner. They were married and Sam brought his bride to share

the poverty of his rural home. Her only dowry was a recipe for mountain dew.

When agricultural depression arrived, many farmers, I learned from Sam, did not wait for politicians to solve their problems. Legislative action was a dim prospect, while the Volstead Act was immediately available for farmers' relief. The high prices of illicit liquor held a powerful incentive for the Middle-Western farmer to convert his surplus grain into a product that would increase his profits a thousandfold. The situation was somewhat similar to that which existed in the early days of the Republic when, lacking transportation facilities for surplus grain, the farmers of the then Middle West converted the surplus into a potable and more portable commodity. The extent of the practice was brought home to Hamilton when he levied the excise tax.

Sam became an apprentice distiller to a neighbor who possessed the small capital necessary to launch the industry. The neighbor not only manufactured a poor product, but rashly neglected to pay his *pro rata* for protection. When he was raided and sent to prison, Sam, now having a little capital of his own, set up an independent establishment. He be-thought him of his wife's dowry, the recipe for mountain dew, and soon was producing a superior quality of "moonshine." Early and late he toiled at his still, his mash barrels and his coils.

"There," said his neighbors, "is a young moonshiner of promise." And so he was. At the time of my sojourn in his vicinity he had paid for a farm of 300 acres, and his profits from the still were about \$300 a week net. His original capital investment was \$500. A gallon of liquor which cost about fifteen cents to produce, including labor and cost of materials, was sold at prices ranging from six to ten dollars. One helper, a shell-shocked war veteran, was employed at the still. Protection was Sam's heaviest expense. His former employer's neglect of it was a lesson not forgotten.

Sam owned two motor cars of the best make, and a truck for conveying goods to retailers. Often Sam's wife would make the trip with him, perched atop the country produce which concealed can and casks. She displayed all of the naïveté of a Maude Muller off to see the city sights.

Five of our immediate neighbors were engaged in this surreptitious industry, though surreptitious is not exactly the adjective to describe an enterprise which was known to the countryside and tacitly approved. One youth in the vicinity was earning enough from occasional distillation during the summer to keep him handsomely at a university for the current session. It was his still I had discovered by chance, on my trip to the dam. Sam told me of thirty moonshiners in a radius of five miles.

Moonshiners in my neighborhood brewed batches of beer for fortnightly orgies. These functions were community events, each guest contributing a nominal sum to cover the cost of hops, malt syrup and incidentals. I was a participant in one of these

affairs. If any social distinction was drawn between the moonshiners and other revelers, it was in favor of the former, who represented the moneyed aristocracy. All of them belonged to the sturdy yokelry, backbone of the nation, as the politicians periodically assure us. All were property holders, all served on juries; and the great majority were prohibitionists. They had voted for representatives who aided in framing the state's severe dry laws.

The practice of violating the dry code, yet lauding it, is one of the mental quirks characteristic of *homo Americanus sapiens*. In intimate contact with professed dries engaged in a criminal conspiracy to commit a flagrant violation of the law, I thought to solve the wet-dry psychological mystery. Now, if ever, I might flash a bull's-eye light on this puzzling mental phenomenon. But I departed from the revel without fresh data. When I ventured to point out the trifling discrepancy between voting dry and drinking wet, no rustic casuist volunteered to reconcile the contrariety of theory and practice. I was not tipped the knowing wink with which an American sometimes pleasantly confesses a measure of hypocrisy and inconsistency. Instead, I was treated to a grave and hiccupping defense of prohibition, precisely the defense made familiar by the Anti-Saloon League!

Apparently the wet-dry psychology is the offspring of congenital inability to think clearly and the evangelical prohibition movement. The state of feeling which causes a Middle Westerner to vote dry and drink wet is the same that causes him to stamp his ballot under the Republican emblem no matter how flagrantly he is cozened by his party. Both his party symbol and the white ribbon have for him a religious implication. The morality of prohibition has been howled at the Middle Westerner from his tenderest years, as the godliness of Republicanism has been bellowed at him from the hustings. Lacking intellectual curiosity and analytical powers of mind, his response to Republican and prohibition stimuli has become, accordingly, a matter of reflex action. The Middle Westerner would no more consider attacking the moral sanction of prohibition than he would question the divine origin of the Ten Commandments, though he might violate prohibition and many of the commandments a score of times daily. If this explanation holds, the average citizen who votes dry and drinks wet is not hypocritical, but merely stupid. He belongs in the same category with Captain Hiram Blakes, the pirate, who, reared in a religious family, held prayer service before he cut throats.

The most interesting of the moonshiners in that vicinity was popularly known as "King of the Island Bootleggers." With cool effrontery the "King" had selected as the site of his distillery a government island where was situated one of the lights to guide river traffic. The rental paid by the "King," I was informed, went to members of the prohibition-enforcement department and did not, I fear, reach the United States Treasury.

The "King" was an athletic, blue-eyed, fair-haired individual, a Nordic who appeared equal to any emergency. His combined business office and residence was a rough plank structure covered with tarred paper to fend against inclement weather. The shack stood a few yards from the shore, facing the main channel of the river, while the still was concealed in the thick undergrowth near the center of the spacious island.

The domain was guarded by a pack of vicious hounds which barked and bayed at all hours. If a stranger approached the island he was greeted by yelling, frenzied brutes. The "King," his brother and two henchmen indulged in several hours' target practice daily, so that the reports of firearms often blended with the yells of dogs. It was not a hospitable atmosphere for strangers, nor did the "King" mean it to be inviting.

His distillery was the largest of the illicit variety I have ever seen, with a capacity of 300 gallons a day. His fast motor boat made several trips daily to supply the trade. He never gave me an estimate of his profits, but his daily output represented a gross profit of about \$2,000. After deducting overhead, including a liberal tribute to prohibition-enforcement officials, I should say that \$5,000 a week net revenue is a conservative estimate.

On one occasion my wife and I had been fishing in the vicinity of the royal isle, which was a two-mile pull from our landing. Observing that the "King" was loading his motor boat for a trip to the trade, I decided to seek the favor of a tow as his route lay in the direction of our landing. While

I was glad of the opportunity to receive a lift, I must confess my secret motive was to afford my prohibitionist wife a close view of Volsteadism.

We found the "King" all smiles and courtesy. He poured out a royal libation, and tied my rowboat to the stern of his launch, in which my wife and I were invited to sit. Off we sped at a thirty-mile clip. Accompanying us was the heir apparent, about nine years old, bright, and, for his age, too sophisticated.

He was amusing himself with his pocketbook, which he would open and shut so that one might see bills of large denominations. Soon his sharp eyes caught sight of an aeroplane, which he pointed out, exclaiming shrilly, "Whiskey, dad, whiskey!" The "King" beamed with fatherly pride at the perspicacity of his son, who gave every promise of succeeding one day to the royal title. With a broad smile the "King" informed us that his son had recognized a plane from Canada on its way to supply the rich city Babbitts with their favorite beverage.

When we cast loose from the launch I covertly glanced at my wife, and, to judge from her expression, she lost on that ride the last of her fond bucolic and Volstead illusions.

In the fall of that year I encountered, while in New Orleans, a canoeist who had descended the Mississippi from its headwaters. He told me that the scent of mash had assailed his nostrils from Lake Itaska to the dock at New Orleans. I can attest the accuracy of his olfactory equipment.

DUNCAN CASSIDY.

Programs in the British Election

BUDGET DAY has come and gone, and on the eve of the British elections Mr. Lloyd George continues to hold the center of the stage. If there is any man in the front rank of politicians who approaches him in audacity and vitality, that man is Mr. Churchill. He is inventive, he is unscrupulous, and he is hampered neither by piety towards his own past nor by loyalty towards the party which for the moment offers him a platform. But with all these gifts, he has produced a witty speech and a dull budget. Mr. Lloyd George, with his usual skill in divining the anxieties and ambitions of the British electorate, had realized that it has only one preoccupation—the total of the unemployed, which through seven years of depression has never fallen below a million. He has forced us all to talk unemployment, as Americans talk prosperity. Labor, indeed, throughout this period has talked of little else, but it talked in a tone of tragedy and denunciation. Mr. Lloyd George changed the note, and attuned it to hope.

Rarely has the mood of a nation altered so sud-

denly. Three months ago ours was the gloomiest country in Europe. We had faced the fact that the greater proportion of these men are permanently workless: that the miners will never descend into a pit again, nor the shipwrights help to launch a ship. The shadow of the human tragedy was over us, and from the auguries of the statisticians we saw no lightening of the cloud. For five years we had lived under a regime of torpor and inaction. It was Mr. Baldwin's continual thesis that in such a situation there is little that any government can do; industry must "work out its own salvation"; one could only wait with folded hands for "trade to revive." The result seemed to be a temporary paralysis of the nation's will. Our pulse beat feebly, and under the treatment of continuous monetary deflation we lived at a sub-normal temperature.

Suddenly, in one rash and buoyant speech, Mr. Lloyd George succeeded in changing our mood. He took it as his watchword that we would "conquer unemployment," and backed it by a pledge that within

a year he could reduce the figures to normal, and that without adding one penny to taxation. One might have smiled at such optimism, and dismissed it as one instance the more of Celtic irresponsibility, but within a week a detailed scheme was flaunting in its orange covers on every newsstand. Here at all events were figures, and behind them was the authority of some of the ablest economists in England.

There was nothing original in the scheme. The broad idea—that public works should be used as a regulator to counteract the vagaries of the trade cycle, expanded at the first distant sign of depression and contracted when trade improves—is as old as the famous minority report on the Poor Law which the Webbs drafted twenty years ago. It has always been Fabian doctrine, and twice, at least, the Labor party has introduced a bill to create an administrative mechanism and a reserve fund to give it effect. It is, of course, the idea which Messrs. Foster and Catchings popularized in their "The Road to Plenty," on which Mr. Hoover has smiled. The idea, as both the progressive parties have handled it in recent years, has become more constructive than it was in its first form. The aim is now to survey our deficiencies, whether in roads, harbors, canals, electrical equipment or land drainage, and, with the double motive of giving work to the unemployed, and of improving our public services, to make a strenuous effort to quicken the tempo and raise the standard of our economic life. It is more than a cure for unemployment; it means a revival of national ambition. Mr. Lloyd George added nothing of any consequence to the concrete proposals which the Labor party has made in every debate during the last five years, and in its own electoral program. But he contrived to give an air of definiteness and actuality to the common material of the Opposition.

His conduct of his campaign has so far been masterly. He strode on to the stage while his rivals were still rehearsing their parts. He delivered the attack, and forced his opponents into the less interesting role of answering him. He drove the Tories, by way of contrast, into what is in effect a reaffirmation of their policy of stagnation. He embarrassed the Labor leaders even more seriously, for they could only make two seemingly inconsistent replies: (1) that he had stolen their program; and (2) that his promises were extravagant and rash. As usual, he has proved himself by far the ablest actor on the scene, and each speech, in its wit, its self-confidence and its wide imaginative scope, proves him the possessor of a vitality which no other leader can approach. If the public could forget his Celtic instability, if the workers could forgive his prolongation of the War, his responsibility for the Black and Tans in Ireland, for the Peace of Versailles and the blockade of Russia, if anyone could feel sure that he will not once again stultify himself by a second

alliance with the Tories, he might even now restore the fortunes of his party.

It is difficult for the Liberal temperament in such a situation as this to do credit to the intelligence of Tory management. One is revolted by its inertia; one reads the speeches of every one of its leaders, save the ex-Liberal Churchill, with a yawn of boredom. And, indeed, the recent by-elections suggest that this is, on the whole, the mood of the electorate. Mr. Baldwin is a more graceful and expansive version of Mr. Coolidge. His touch is lighter; he can talk very pleasantly about books and country life; he can be fervid and evangelical in preaching his gospel of social peace; but in action he is very nearly as timid and negative. To make a virtue of a habit of inaction is possible when a man presides over prosperity; it is difficult when trade remains depressed for seven years.

It is traditional in England for their opponents to refer to the Conservatives as "the stupid party." Yet from Disraeli to Balfour they have never lacked brilliant leaders, and they include three-fourths of the professional class, of the academic intelligence of the Universities, and of the captains of industry. The appearance of stupidity is entirely delusive. The fact is that a great part of their clientele desires and requires no new departure in our national life. In spite of the industrial depression, banking thrives, and so do most of the distributive trades. "The City's" interests (by which we mean finance) have been well served through all these years of deflation, and behind the City is the whole *rentier* class, bigger and incomparably more influential in our older society than it is in America. With it march the solid phalanx of the semi-parasitic population, the big servant class, the purveyors of luxury, and the villagers who still live, half-dazzled, half-intimidated, under the social leadership and the economic despotism of the landlord, and his spiritual lieutenant, the parson. These people ask for no program; they prefer inertia; they find satisfaction for their need of romance in the picture of a vast empire, and in loyalty to the throne.

The problem for the Tories, as an election approaches, is to find for this solid main body the support of a fringe of the unorganized and non-political population, the smaller middle class, the women, old and young, and the workers who have not yet come under the influence of the Labor movement. For these one does cater with intelligence. The schemes of Mr. Lloyd George and the Labor party, even when one reduces them to the simplest terms, demand too much thinking, too much knowledge, some power of imagination, some social altruism. These people are won by bribes or by fear. For the women, who in this election will vote for the first time at their full strength, the Tories offer two inducements, both unobjectionable as far as they go. Mr. Churchill has abolished the duty on tea, and Mr. Baldwin has promised, rather vaguely, some improvement and expansion, apparently by

the creation of a free national service of midwifery, of the care which the community offers to the working-class mother. A cruder sort of bribe is aimed at the farmer, for his habitual loyalty to the Tory party had been shaken in recent contests. He is told that for half the year the army and navy will be fed on 50 percent of British beef and 25 percent of British wheat—a ludicrously petty inducement. The other offer looks bigger, but is in fact delusive. Agricultural land will be immediately relieved of the whole burden of local taxation (rates). Unfortunately this will only mean, in the majority of the cases, that the farmers, who are usually on a yearly tenancy, will have to pay away in higher rents to the landlords all that they seem to have gained by the abolition of rates.

Fear is a stronger motive. In 1924 the Tories swept the hesitating voter into their net by their use of the almost-certainly forged Zinoviev letter to discredit the Labor policy of an economic *rapprochement* with Russia. On this occasion they will try to rekindle the passions of the General Strike, with such additional assistance as they can derive from an occasional indiscretion, like Mr. Snowden's unlucky statement that he would "repudiate" the Tory settlements of the Allied debts—by which he meant, of course, not that he would repudiate debt (he was, indeed, speaking chiefly of the debts which France and Italy owe to us), but that he would avail himself of any opening to revise what he regards as over-generous arrangements.

To do them justice, the Tories are not without a policy for unemployment, though it is of a characteristically negative kind. They have passed an act which relieves "productive" industry of three-quarters of the burden of local taxation. These taxes, levied on the value of land, buildings and plant, were a blot on our fiscal system. They discouraged improvements, and whenever a locality was forced, through acute unemployment, to increase its expenditure under the Poor Law, the burden fell with crushing weight on its already staggering industries. The result of the inequality of burdens has been to accelerate the migration of industry and population from the North to the Center and South. Lower rates are an inducement to this migration, while electricity supplies the power and the automobile the transport. Industry need crowd no longer round the coal-fields and their network of railroads. It is a simple element of justice to industry in the stricken North that its burdens should be averaged out and transferred to national taxation. It is also a gain that these charges should fall no longer directly on the budget of the manufacturing corporation, but rather on the private income of the taxpayer. In addition to measures to assist internal migration from the distressed areas, and emigration to the Dominions, which as yet have accomplished very little, the Tories rely on "safeguarding," which is the modern euphemism for protection. As yet it has been ap-

plied only to a number of minor trades, like lace and buttons, and Mr. Baldwin, in his dreary opening speech, pressed heavily on the soft pedal. But if his party has its way, the next trade to be "safeguarded" will be iron and steel, and that, by its effect on other trades, must soon lead to something like a general tariff.

The real peculiarity of Tory rule during these years of depression has lain less in the pettiness of its remedies, and its instinctive belief in *laissez-faire*, than in its financial policy. Every sane man is in favor of monetary stabilization; we differ rather in the direction of our fears. The *rentier* class, and timid natures of all classes, have such a mad fear of inflation, that they will, without a qualm, condemn us to the lowering regimen of a slight but incessant deflation. This, in effect, is what the Tories have done, to the gain of the possessing class, and the distress of productive industry and the workers. It was inevitable, after Mr. Churchill's premature return to the gold standard (the chief among the several causes, some temporary and some of long standing, which explain the sickness of the basic export trades). But it has been perpetuated in the act which regulates the currency, which reveals the Tory bias towards deflation, for it enables the Bank of England, practically at will, to lessen the volume of currency, while for any expansion it must seek the authority of Parliament.

It is this unreasoning terror of inflation which explains the Tory refusal to embark upon any adequate scale on schemes of capital development which would absorb the unemployed. They promise, indeed (though they affect to be too prudish to promise anything), to do a little for the railways, rather more for slum-clearance, and most of all for improvements in Africa. But the country has had experience of the pettiness of their scale of action. They suffer from a chronic fear of greatness, save, indeed, when they survey the map and count the tonnage of our warships.

The Labor program had not yet been published when this article was written. Labor has, indeed, its booklet, "Labor and the Nation," which outlines, somewhat vaguely, a sweeping policy of reconstruction in fifty breathless pages. But there is more here than the most sanguine and energetic party could hope to achieve in five years, even if it should enjoy an absolute majority, and could cope with the obstruction of the Lords. It proposes many measures of nationalization on which it could not embark, if it comes to office with a minority in the Commons. Its drafting lacks an organizing idea, and leaves one in some doubt as to the immediate objectives of its policy. The Liberals also have their full-length program, worked out in three very readable books, for land, coal, and industry generally. But Mr. Lloyd George has had the wit to focus attention on unemployment, and to pick out from a program nearly as vast as Labor's the

proposals which directly bear upon it. His thinking may be more superficial than that of Labor's draftsmen, but he is much the shrewder psychologist.

Up to a point, the two policies must run on parallel roads. This work of development is urgent, and it is the one certain way of bringing the unemployed promptly back to well paid and socially productive work. Slum-clearance, electrical expansion, and the drainage of water-logged land are common to both programs. Labor will insist on easing the market for employment by withdrawing from it at both ends the very old and the very young. It proposes to raise the age of compulsory school attendance by a year, and to extend old-age pensions downwards.

But two further problems remain. "Rationalization" (by which we mean the advance of mechanization and combination in industry) adds continuously to the army of the unemployed. It is not easy to hope much from an expansion, or even from a recovery of our export market. But can we, by raising the buying power of the masses, expand the home market? And can we, above all in dairy-farming and kindred branches of agriculture, discover new trades or neglected trades, which may be fostered to absorb the unemployed? A constructive labor policy must turn on these two objectives, and in pursuit of it one must fear neither borrowing nor taxation. A more even distribution of the national income through the instrument of taxation, a stress on the stimulus of higher and more diffused consumption, these, indeed, are part of the remedy for chronic unemployment. The test of leadership in this campaign will lie in the ability of Labor's spokesmen to suggest that their proposals of high taxation to expand the social services are inspired, not by a predatory motive, but by a scientific concern for economic health.

London.

H. N. BRAILSFORD.

The Story-Teller

He talked, and as he talked
Wallpaper came alive;
Suddenly ghosts walked,
And four doors were five;

Calendars ran backward,
And maps had mouths;
Ships went tackward
In a great drowse;

Trains climbed trees,
And soon dripped down
Like honey of bees
On the cold brick town.

He had wakened a worm
In the world's brain,
And nothing stood firm
Until day again.

MARK VAN DOREN.

Washington Notes

THE MOST interesting piece of news in Washington within the last week got little attention in the newspapers, though it brought from the State Department an extraordinary note of apology to the ambassador of a foreign country and an almost unprecedented rebuke to a newspaper publisher. I refer to the amazing attack in Edward B. McLean's Washington Post upon the Belgian Ambassador, the Prince de Ligne. So far as anyone can recall, the editorial assault by Mr. McLean on the Belgian Ambassador is without precedent. The reasons were apparently wholly personal. It is the sort of thing about which all the facts ought to be printed but probably never will be. Evidence of the unjustifiable nature of the assault is sufficiently given, however, in the Stimson letter to the Belgian Ambassador, in which he characterizes it as "discourteous and unfounded," goes far out of his way to pay tribute to the "satisfactory and agreeable" character of his personal as well as official relations with de Ligne, and "deplores" and "regrets" the "breach" of hospitality.

While the incident is interesting it is not important, except as a demonstration of the way in which newspaper power can be abused. A particularly interesting thing to me, however, is that while the assault has created a vast social sensation in Washington and a great many people have expressed themselves as shocked and disgusted, neither their shock nor disgust will prevent continued acceptance of the lavish McLean hospitality, which has been an overpowering feature of Washington life for a good many years, and invitations to partake of which practically all cabinet members and their wives in both the Harding and the Coolidge administrations were accustomed to accept, with one exception—the Hoovers. The ownership of two large newspapers is a great social asset in a place where society is nine-tenths political and in a country where the politicians are ninety-nine one-hundredths time-servers.

Wholly aside from the unpleasant business above referred to, Washington interest in the last week has suddenly concentrated upon the diplomatic appointment still to be made by the President. I am told that it irritates Mr. Hoover considerably to have premature announcements of any appointment, but particularly of his diplomatic selections. He takes considerable pains to prevent leakage, but in vain. Once a real decision is reached, the news spreads. It can't be helped. After a while Herbert will learn the futility of trying to bottle things up, but the leakage of advance information concerning his purposes will always sit poorly on his chest. He never will like it, and I don't blame him. In one way, he furnishes, gladly, more publicity as to the public business than any of his predecessors—for example, his order revealing the endorsers of federal judges and district attorneys—but in another, he wants to give less. I have reason to believe that the premature publication of the Dawes selection was extremely unpleasant to him, particularly as he was entirely unable to locate the leak.

Equally disagreeable to Hoover, I think, are the advance stories that Senator Walter Edge of New Jersey will go to Paris as the successor of the late Myron T. Herrick. There has been no direct confirmation of this, but there

are a good many reasons for believing it to be true. If it turns out that way, it will be the most mysterious move made by Mr. Hoover up to date, the one for which no genuinely plausible explanation has as yet been offered. While not wishing to detract from any credit due Mr. Herrick, I am one of those, with reasonably good opportunities of observation, who thought the eulogies pronounced upon him after his death were considerably out of proportion. Mr. Herrick was a pleasant, amiable man, greatly beloved by the French for the simple reason that he invariably took the 100 percent French view. In my opinion he was not, however, either a great man or a great ambassador. None the less it seems to me that Edge would be a step down from the Herrick standard. He is a first-class, highly successful advertising man. He has some extremely intimate Standard Oil connections and has made a great fortune, but if he has any of the usually accepted qualifications for an important ambassadorial post—even a knowledge of the language of the country he wants to represent—they are entirely hidden from the naked eye. He is a mediocre Senator and an uninteresting man. It is true he was early on the Hoover bandwagon in New Jersey, but he had no close personal relations with Hoover himself, at least, so far as is known. The thing is a mystery. It is such a mystery that I have some small doubt about the reports being true, notwithstanding the emphatic belief of practically everyone who ought to know that the appointment will be made immediately following the adjournment of the special session.

If Edge is appointed, it will do one thing, which is to open the way for Joe Frelinghuysen to come back to the Senate—or at any rate, it gives him the chance to try. There seems slight doubt that, with Edge out, Frelinghuysen can get the nomination if he chooses to go after it hard enough. Beating the formidable Edwards in the general elections, however, is something else. One of the reasons given for Edge's desire to go to Paris is fear that he would not be able to do so. If Frelinghuysen does come back to the Senate it will not, I think, be as a friend of Hoover. The Washington report is that a considerable part of the money used to carry Virginia for Hoover came from Frelinghuysen, who was undoubtedly one of the really liberal contributors of the campaign. After the election, I am told, Mr. Frelinghuysen had the not-unnatural notion that some sort of recognition should come his way, and a place in the Cabinet was the thing best suited to his book. His eye was said to be first fixed upon the Secretaryship of War as about right, and he had considerable backing, not only from New Jersey, but from a gentleman by the name of Slemph who had some little to do with the Virginia campaign. When it became plain that the Frelinghuysen-for-the-Cabinet idea failed to ring the bell with Herbert, I am told his forces switched to the diplomatic field, holding, however, that there were but two places Mr. Frelinghuysen would accept—London or Paris. With London occupied by the redoubtable Dawes, Paris gone to Edge, and the Cabinet full, it does seem as though poor Joe Frelinghuysen were a little—just a little—out of luck. The Edge business would be a mystery if there were no Frelinghuysen. With Frelinghuysen admittedly a claimant for recognition, the mystery deepens.

Continuing along diplomatic lines, the latest tip of the alleged "insiders" is that Ambassador Henry P. Fletcher, now in Rome, is to become Governor-General of the Philippines, thus side-tracking the Roosevelt cousins, Theodore and Nicholas, and filling with a pretty astute and careful fellow a position which Mr. Hoover unquestionably considers vitally important. About the time I am ready to give full credence to this report, there comes a strong revival of the old story of the Fletcher desire to come to the Senate from Pennsylvania. If there were really a vacancy it would be easy enough for Governor Fisher, urged by the Mellons, to name him to the place, but there is no real vacancy. Mr. Vare is not only living, but—so the word is from Philadelphia—improving in health. His case is still unsettled by the Senate. Eventually it will be settled and I think he will be thrown out, but when, is another question. The most plausible theory about Mr. Fletcher is that he will stay in Rome a year, and if by that time the Vare case is still pending, will give up hope and go to the Philippines. This, however, is plainly predicated upon the idea that Mr. Hoover will wait that long before making this important appointment. That Fletcher would rather be in the Senate than any other place is beyond doubt.

T. R. B.

Washington.

Tad

IN ONE of the tributes to Tad published last week, it was suggested that he originated the phrase, "23—Skidoo," and most of the obituary notices spoke more seriously of his contributions to American slang than of his work as a draughtsman. It is true that he launched, if he did not invent, "Yes, we have no bananas" and "cake-eater" and dozens of other phrases which had at once a sort of personal wit and national character; they concentrated in easily remembered form something of his sardonic attitude to the world around him. But they were always to be found in the corners of his pictures, not so much in the speech of his main characters as in the asides and comments given to little geometrical figures who also said, "What? No Spinach?" and made up "daffydills."

The drawings were always the most important part of Tad's work, and of these the best was the series of Indoor and Outdoor Sports. The funniest was a fantastic creation called Judge Rummy, a dog in judicial robes who passed sentence upon other dogs, or met them socially. This was close to the normal type of comic strip, it was done for the fun in the pictures and spoken words, for the humor of the drawing, and rarely was satirical. When, a few years ago, Tad was compelled to remove from all the excitement and variety of life in New York, he dropped the Judge and also a more elaborate full-page comic, "For Better or Worse." An obscure heart disease made him a prisoner in his home, and the man who had lived with newspaper men and prize-fighters and had helped to create an attitude toward Times Square lived at second hand, with a radio to report fights. His humor, which was never good humor in the ordinary sense, did not flag. While other comic-strip artists went to Palm Beach or White Sulphur and

dated their comics there, Tad, immured on Long Island, used to date his Moscow or Peking.

The Sports series had nothing to do with sport, except that they appeared on the sporting pages of the New York Journal. Last year Tad added to them a weekly strip full of gibes at umpires, ball players, football heroes and the like; but what he had to say about the men of sport was essentially what he had to say about human beings in general, and it was oddly like what his neighbor, Ring Lardner, has to say of them. The framework of the Sports series was simple: at a grocery store or a barber shop or on the street, two or three people are making asses of themselves, either because they are born idiots or have suddenly become pretentious and silly; and around them half a dozen others are making comments. It seems a peculiarly unmanageable scheme; you would think it would lose point, as most gibing at people loses point, or that it would become monotonous. Yet in years of seeing it every day, I have never found it dull.

There was, first of all, Tad's extraordinary draughtsmanship. He had lost several fingers of his right hand and taught himself to draw with his left; his line, perhaps because of that, was a little crabbed, but not uneasy. He drew sharply, precisely, without any sense of black and white, with little design, but with an almost flawless sense of composition for focusing of interest. You became instantly aware of the fatuity exploiting itself in the picture, and the surrounding comment underlined your own. The ugliness of the human faces Tad drew was remarkable; it was not like the grotesque ugliness of Goldberg, and had nothing to do with the average cartoonist's incapacity to draw men and women; these people were real and were well drawn, and were absurdly ugly; and time after time you would see them on the streets, regrettably unaware of the fact that Tad had destroyed them with a line. They had been observed: the way their noses protruded and the way they sat on chairs and the way they smiled when they were trying to pretend that the boss wasn't a damn fool and the way they leaned on counters when they wanted the butcher to take back a pound of meat they had bought three days before and forgotten in the ice box.

Some of these were purely conventional characters: the Irish cook, fat, good-humored, slightly ironic; the traditional iceman or constable. But the central figures were all drawn from the life, and Tad's mind was full of stored-up observations: he had seen the managing editor bring his lout of a son into the office or he had seen something which he could make into a village policeman after a visit to the big city; he had seen people trying to sublet their apartment to reluctant prospects; he knew what people looked like when they bragged or envied or belittled or lied. He wrote these things down in his short lines of drawing and gave them a word or two to say, a word with a characteristic rhythm and a personal freshness; and after that they were exactly right, they were known quantities.

He seems to have seen very little that was creditable to the human race, or he found what was creditable not suitable to his medium. But sardonic as his humor was, it was not vicious, and the reason was that he saw a little more than he usually reported. These people of his, even the meanest, are pathetic. Their efforts to be grand are

foredoomed—the garbage man sees through them. But Tad seems to know that his people are romancing. I recall one of his full pages: a man doesn't want to stay home with his wife and announces he has important business down the street; he greets the policeman at the corner and the policeman moves off on his business; he stops at the cigar store and discusses the weather; he wanders into a barber shop and talks about the baseball score; he tries to be useful to someone by picking up a dropped package; then, throwing out his chest, he returns home. Tad has given you no suggestion that he has friends who happen not to be around; he has only shown you a sort of dumb longing which is disappointed; and gently suggested what self-importance the man will give himself when he reenters his home. The gentle rhythm of the picture reminded you of Sherwood Anderson's lighter stories—like them, it had something poetic.

I am not trying to make a literary analogy between Tad and Lardner, only to suggest a temperamental affinity. Here is a passage from "The Big Town," describing the life of a summer-resort hotel:

Saturday nights everybody puts on their evening clothes like something was going to happen. But it don't. Sunday mornings the husbands and bachelors get up earlier than usual to go to their real business, which is golf. The women-folks are in full possession of the hotel till Sunday night supper and wives and husbands don't see one another all day long, but it don't seem as long as if they did. Most of them's approaching their golden jubilee and haven't nothing more to say to each other that you could call a novelty. The husband may make the remark, Sunday night, that he would have broke one hundred and twenty . . . if the caddy hadn't of handed him a spoon when he asked for a nut pick, and the wife'll probably reply that she's got to go in Town some day soon and see a chiropodist. . . .

Or consider the enormous fatuity of the hero of "You Know Me Al," the brutal report on the flash life of Broadway in "A Day with Conrad Green," the calm contempt in "Some Like Them Cold," and the deflation of all social and intellectual and human pretentiousness in the wilder pieces of Lardner's fancy. All of them parallel Tad's work. You cannot think of any of Lardner's characters as handsome men, and his women are, if pretty, offensively pretty; they are visualized by Tad. And conversely, you cannot see one of Tad's people in any attitude of heroism or generosity; their life outside his pictures has been recorded by Lardner.

It seems to me noteworthy that these two extremely popular artists should have made so sour a commentary on precisely those portions of American life which are supposed to be peculiarly healthy and sound—the life of sports and gaiety; and should have held their patrons; and should have gone on, totally unmoved by popularity or riches or criticism, to be acrid and unsparing about everything they touched. Neither has a universal range, neither makes any show of profundity; but both have laughed loudly and unkindly at the very American people who are supposed to resent criticism and to reject whatever report of themselves is not pretty and heroic and inflated with sentimentalities.

Why Lardner and Tad should say what they say is another question; that they could say it and carry with them prestige and popularity, is a phenomenon worth consideration. My own notion is that, if we are going to be proud of the fact that these artists were born in our country, we might be a little complacent to think that we accepted them and, if we didn't exactly make them benign, made them welcome—while we rejected hundreds of others not fit to black their boots.

GILBERT SELDES.

The Passion Play

The Passion Play. The Hippodrome. April 29, 1929.

THE PASSION PLAY from Freiburg has been in this country since last August, playing here and there in every part, presenting its drama in coöperation with local assistants, mobs and choirs. The thousands of people who have seen it in various places, where, I fancy, it varied in depth, sincerity, pathos and vulgarity according to the hands that touched it, know its history well enough, the advance publicity and the programs have seen to that. They know that its ancestors appeared in the ninth century, that the Freiburg Passion Play was first acted in 1264, and that in the course of things its full flowering and popularity had arrived by the end of the sixteenth century. They know how the Passion Play began at the altar and ended outside the cathedral walls and on the lavish floats of the trade guilds who were given the right to distribute the scenes and incidents among them and to vie with one another in zeal; that in the eighteenth century the mystery had descended into a mere puppet play; that, seeing it thus in all its dumb show and irreverent noise, one of the Fasnacht family petitioned the council to let him change it back into its older form; that the same family of Fasnacht has given the Passion Play since 1760; that the Fasnachts give it in Freiburg, Baden, every three years; and that in this American production the Christ, Judas, Mary, Mary Magdalene, John and Blind Woman are all played by one of their name.

What the play is like in Freiburg these spectators might to some extent guess. It doubtless has a certain simplicity and sincerity of approach, a community warmth and enthusiasm and recognition of the performers personally, a local pride and coöperation. None of the acting is remarkable. That of Judas by Georg Fasnacht would naturally be seized on for mention. It is a highly accessible part, almost actor-proof, full of subtle possibilities and capable of various interpretations. The situation with the betrayer of Messiah, of friend, of master, of dreamer, of cause and brotherhood—you may take it for any of these or all of them—is patently dramatic and easily dramatized in everyone's mind according to the individual. Georg Fasnacht's make-up—after old models in painting—is excellent and his performance very good. The Marys, the Blind Woman, the priests, high and low, Pilate and the rest are fair enough as local playing; as acting they are only passable and not always that. The Christ of Adolph Fasnacht is doubtless quiet and touching, not jarring with old conceptions and simple type outlines, not out of harmony with the cathedral and men's recollections of an inherited mass, church ornament, memory, ritual and doctrine. The

general visual side of it, the settings, costumes and properties, would very likely be modest and effective, with the shadow of trees, or old stone, and the light of the open sky and clouds and sun, and with those well known figures from among the citizens, and those memories of other performances in other years.

This a member of an audience anywhere in America that the Passion Play has been might know. But he might wonder, as we might, what New York does to it; and how this inherited simplicity and fervor and mild, ancient pictorial tradition might come off in the enormous Hippodrome and for the millions of beings that make up a great city. Well, the sad truth to report is that the Passion Play was almost wholly messed up. Those scenes with crowds, courts and market-places are at best simple and in a certain chromo style warm and lively; perhaps in Freiburg they are even impressive. But here, alas!

In that local aspect, to judge them more strictly would be only pedantic and idle. The costume colors here at the Hippodrome are mostly kept solid, as they very likely are in Freiburg; but the superimposition of miles of satin begins at the outset to play havoc. The combinations of electrical tricks lack vision and austerity of mood, are full of expensive and arrant ingenuity, and introduce obvious associations and crass banalities fatal to the spiritual impression and in the worst of taste—those rising glooms and radiances, for example, with their Broadway chiaroscuro, that spotlight hallowedness at moments, those surfaces fading out into other effects behind them, so threadbare even in melodrama; that Holy Grail with the red light in it; these are all sad rot, the poor old barren theater's bottom dollar. Also the messing over of the building itself, that pseudo-Roman solemnity and sacred architectural atmosphere, or whatever it is, in the lobbies and near the proscenium, those cathedral and basilica effects, in sum, could scarcely impress the simplest of beings. When we come to the last degradation of everything, both Passion Play and theatrical décor, I mean the court of Herod, with the plumes, maidens, the Negro three-fourths naked, the dancing girl with sequins and musical comedy wiles—the circus is far better. A good deal of the music, despite the Russian Choir that was added to the orchestra and organ and failed to seem very impressive, got the effect of movie music only; and the animals, dyed palms, beads and other accessories suggested mere vulgar multiplicity and eager, misplaced lavishness.

Two or three of the scenes were different. The Last Supper, done after Leonardo's famous piece, was in its way good, though the nakedness of detail from earlier Gothic masters followed in the crucifixion scene later was infinitely better. After all, Leonardo was pure academic Renaissance, and had about him nothing of the primitive or final that this story of the Passion exhibits. And this scene of the Last Supper suffered from the trick lighting, the Parsifal red-light goblet and the disappearing background to the windows, with an altar effect transposed upon it. The scene around the tomb, with the dusky light, the mass of rock wall, was effective, though spoiled presently by electrical improvisations. One scene was really beautiful, the crucifixion. The three figures against the sky, the simple treatment, following old paintings, the group at the foot of the cross on which the man they loved was dying, to-

gether with the power of the story itself, made one of the most unforgettable moments I have ever seen in the theater or anywhere. The Descent from the Cross, taken as art, was even more remarkable. The quiet and sincere reliance on traditional design in earlier paintings, for the movements, the ladder, the cloth by which the body was lowered to those waiting below to receive it, the matter-of-fact timing of the action, was very beautiful and distinguished and all the more moving because of that. These two scenes, then, belonged, so far as the Hippodrome goes, to the Fassnachts and their old city; and so far as art goes, to an old, austere and strict design in religious paintings and religious tradition. Most of the rest of the stage pictures contrived, including the alpha and omega of trumpeting angels that opened and closed the play, were in the poor semi-realistic slush of nineteenth-century religious painting, especially German and English, helped out by chromos, tinsel, electric dimmers and colored bulbs.

Anyone playing Christ could hope to satisfy but few, no matter how he does it; since one imagines Christ a big man, one a small, one powerful, another frail and flame-

like, one rough and evangelical or communistic, another majestic, Grecian or orderly, one poetical, one tender and meek, and so on. A very great artist by sheer power might create a figure of Christ in the artist's own likeness and poetry—as Chaliapin does with Boris—but otherwise the role is open to every sort of solution. I thought Adolph Fassnacht's first entrance, with the palms going in the air and the stage crowd marshalling itself in the amber lights and up the temple steps, was moving—there was something moving about this figure, unreal and like a mask, very white, very still, as if it had walked out of an altar-piece. It at least contrived to be neither offensive nor egotistically insistent. Considering the literal simplicity of outline that the story has in these old Passion Plays, and in the New Testament version for that matter, there is nothing to do but keep all as still and typical as may be, and meanwhile into that outward form to pour as much inner intensity and belief as possible. In the scene with the cross, and the crucifixion scene above all, the portrayal of Jesus seemed to me, if never great in any sense, to be genuine and never wrong.

STARK YOUNG.

C O R R E S P O N D E N C E

The Church and the Intellectuals

SIR: Mr. Edmund Wilson's article on T. S. Eliot and the Church seems to me a good example of that admirable style and illucid thinking characteristic of many American journalists when they deal with Catholicism, but not usually characteristic of Mr. Wilson, who is perhaps the best critic in America at the present time.

"No one will dispute," says Mr. Wilson, "that the world at present is badly in need of the sort of ideals which the Church was able formerly to supply." So far, so good; either the Church is no longer able to supply such ideals, in which case the popular assumption that the Church never changes is mistaken, or else it is impossible for most people to accept the fundamental doctrines of the Church. Mr. Wilson himself is far too able a thinker to believe the first part of this alternative, but he has based his entire review of Eliot's book on the second, and in so doing he betrays, I think, himself and his whole school of criticism. For it is the favorite axiom of this school that the majority of people, at least here in America, far from becoming more educated in the things of the spirit are becoming steadily less so; and if I am incorrect in attributing this opinion as axiomatic to Mr. Wilson, it is at any rate axiomatic to me. In other words, if "educated" people are now unable to accept the fundamental dogmas of the Church, I do not think it fair to blame the latter for the rather obvious degeneration of the modern mind in the sphere of religion.

"It seems difficult," writes Mr. Wilson, "to imagine royalty and the Church becoming more, instead of less, important." But both have become important locally in Europe, and that within the time since Mr. Wilson began to write. Fascism by any other name would smell as sweet. What difference does it make whether you treat your king symbolically and call him Vittorio Emmanuele, or actually and call him Mussolini? As for the Church, Mr. Wilson cannot see how a renaissance of faith can ever again be general. But a renaissance of faith is already general in France, that is, among Mr. Wilson's "educated people." And why shouldn't it be? Thomas Aquinas is, I believe, considered a first-rate mind even by many people who do not share Thomas Aquinas' convictions. Even St. Augustine of Carthage, who lived eight hundred years before, had a mind no less first-rate, let us say, than that of Mr. Mencken. Logically, I cannot see why second-rate minds of the American twentieth century

should reject intellectual food which was the Bread of the Angels to first-rate minds of the thirteenth.

It may not appear particularly germane to the subject, but I ought to add that I have known plenty of dumb and silly Catholics, especially, let me say, among the more "educated," or at least, esthetic, ranks of the faithful. But I do wish that Mr. Wilson and other critics with something like his intellectual caliber and generosity would cease to judge the Church by its multitude of weak links.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

Kent, Conn.

SIR: Between a believer and an unbeliever, there can, in a sense, be no real argument; and there is usually but little point in accusations of lack of logic and "illucid thinking" brought by one against the other. They may both be equally lucid and logical; they simply start from different premises and arrive at different conclusions. Mr. Wright has faith in the Catholic renaissance in France because he has faith in the Church; I cannot believe that it will prove very important, because I am not a Catholic. In the meantime, I can only ask Mr. Wright, who are the great modern Catholic writers and thinkers? There are a few, but, it seems to me, not many. I never disputed, as Mr. Wright seems to imply, St. Thomas Aquinas' greatness, any more than I dispute Dante's. But it is difficult for me to imagine a modern philosopher or poet equally great existing within the Church. It seems to me that, in our own day, most of the important intellectual work which is done lies completely outside the Church, Protestant and Catholic alike—and this for the reason that the dogmas upon which the Churches base their systems are as unacceptable to most educated people as the belief that the sun goes round the earth or that diseases may be cured by charms.

It is not axiomatic to me at all that the majority of the people are becoming steadily less educated in the things of the spirit. In the first place, I have never been able to make any such clear distinction as this opinion seems to imply between what we call the spirit and what we call the body. Man cannot live by bread alone, but he cannot live by prayer alone either. I am very far from being sure, as Mr. Wright seems to be, that humanity as a whole is not better off in the United States to-day than in Europe in the thirteenth century. It depends on what you mean by "better off"—it depends on what you

mean by civilization. Eliot says that he means "a spiritual and intellectual coördination on a high level," as distinguished from "material progress, cleanliness, etc." But, as a matter of fact, are not these two kinds of things inextricably bound up together? Is there really any difference in value between the instinct to be clean or to travel quickly and the instinct to preach fine sermons or to write beautiful verses? Does not civilization include all these things, and, in discussing how much people are civilized at any given place or time, must we not take all these things into account? Mr. Wright would probably like better art and literature than the contemporary American world produces—and so should I. But how would the other inhabitants of the country like to be set back in the European conditions of the thirteenth century—with no bath-rooms, no public schools and no automobiles? With the ignorance, the slavery and the plagues of that day, would they really be "spiritually" better off? Would the cathedrals really make it up to them? Would Dante and Aquinas make it up to them? Would those masterpieces of medieval civilization really make it up to Mr. Wright and myself?—And in the meantime, the sciences today have their disciplines, their great doctors and their saints.

As for the question of royalty, the kings were dropping like apples in a storm, during and immediately after the War. It is true that we have had Lenin and Mussolini—but these are dictators and not kings. Lenin has not been succeeded by an heir, nor will Mussolini be. And the ascendancy of neither depends upon the existence of a privileged class whose privileges are also hereditary.

EDMUND WILSON.

New York City.

The Case against Governor Long

SIR: Although I did not vote for Mr. Long when he ran for Governor of the state of Louisiana, I am heartily in accord with the views expressed in the editorial of your issue of April 24, headed "Impeachment or Persecution in Louisiana?"

Most of the charges against Governor Long are of a flimsy character, but due to the press being bitterly against him, only one side of the question is presented to the public, and that with sensational headlines. It is so clearly a case of persecution that one naturally sympathizes with Governor Long, and as a resident of Louisiana the writer deplores the action his enemies have undertaken for political reasons alone.

It is hoped that the impeachment proceedings will fail.

J. H. SIMPSON,
Manager, New Orleans Traffic
and Forwarding Association.

New Orleans, La.

Single-tax Logic

SIR: Your editorial, "Hoover's Debenture Decalogue," should be called to the attention of the S. P. C. P.—Society for the revention of Cruelty to Presidents. The deadly parallel is unquestionably an assault with a deadly weapon.

Of course, the same line of logic can be applied to all taxes on roductive energy and productive capital, and when one has finished being logical, there is nothing left for taxation but land alues.

When the present program of congressional ineptitudes has had s day and failed of effecting farm relief, the farm leaders will new their efforts to have the embattled farmers get together and t as a single unit.

HERBERT JANVRIN BROWNE.

Washington, D. C.

To Aid the British Labor Party

SIR: I am reliably informed that the British Labor party is handicapped by lack of funds in the coming General Election. The Trade Unions and Trades Dispute Act passed last year the Baldwin government has resulted in a serious curtailment

of the party's income from trade-union dues, and the British work-ers are generally very poor.

I believe that nothing is more important at this time for the progress and peace of the world than the success of the Labor party in the coming election and its possible return to the govern-ment, and I know that a large number of progressive Americans outside of the Socialist party feel the same way about it.

In behalf of a small group of sympathizers, I have recently sent a modest contribution to the war chest of the Labor party, which has been very gratefully accepted. I feel certain that many of your readers will be glad to give what they can for the good cause.

Contributions may be sent directly to the Labor Party, Trans- port House, Smith Square, London, or if they are sent to me, at 19 West Forty-fourth Street, New York City, I shall transmit them by cable as fast as received.

MORRIS HILLQUIT.

New York City.

President Stratton

SIR: In your issue of April 24, you devote two editorial para- graphs to a discussion of President Stratton of the Massachu- setts Institute of Technology. You note that he told members of the liberal club of that institute that it was inadvisable for them to discuss religion, politics and militarism. He also, as you point out, said that every intelligent person knows that preparedness is the only way to peace and that discussion would merely provoke confusion and ill-feeling.

May I point out that President Stratton was one of the three members of the Governor's Advisory Committee which recom- mended the execution of Sacco and Vanzetti? It need only be added that Sacco and Vanzetti, as you remember, were free-think- ers in religion, anarchists and draft evaders.

GARDNER JACKSON.

Boston, Mass.

What to Do with Ex-Presidents

SIR: Your editorial dealing with Mr. Coolidge's literary activ- ities raises the question of ex-presidential occupations. As we have very few ex-Presidents, why not make them *ex-officio* mem- bers of the Senate, with all rights and privileges of that body?

It would give them a sufficiently dignified forum to present their views to the country; and give to the country the benefit of their experience where it is needed the most. Perhaps, also, it would keep them from exploitation by mercenary magazine pub- lishers.

E. O. RICE.

Prosser, Wash.

A Plea for the Textile Strikers

SIR: New Republic readers are not unacquainted with the facts of the southern textile strikes. Louis Stark's articles clearly show that this strike deserves support not only on the grounds of particular need for relief for strikers and their families, but also because this strike affects the well-being of the textile workers of the whole country. Southern chambers of commerce have too long been flaunting with impunity the invitation "to come south and get cheap and docile labor."

The Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, quiescent since its campaign for the relief of striking miners, is now conducting a campaign for the southern textile workers. The need for money is immediate and pressing. This is a real case where he gives twice who gives quickly. Please send contributions to Forrest Bailey, Treasurer, Emergency Committee for Strikers' Relief, Room 931, 70 Fifth Avenue, New York City.

NORMAN THOMAS,
Chairman,
JOHN HERLING,
Secretary.

New York City.

Bryan

Bryan, by M. R. Werner. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 374 pages. \$3.50.

MR. BRYAN was such a picturesque figure, he had such positive opinions on so many subjects, that almost every author and critic writes him down as a statesman, scholar and theologian, or a mountebank, ignoramus and bigot.

I knew him well for many years. I supported him twice for President, and voted against him the third time he ran. I am satisfied that Mr. Werner has drawn a fair and unprejudiced picture of the man as he really was. It is plain that the author had a deserved admiration for his early career, but believes that Mr. Bryan was ignorant, intolerant and bigoted in his later years. In his young manhood Bryan's whole attention was given to politics. After repeated defeats and loss of political power he turned to religion. He then devoted his energies not only to saving souls, but to punishing all those who were not interested in his form of salvation.

Mr. Bryan's father was a lawyer, and a thrifty man, whose chief interests were politics and religion. He was elected judge, and habitually opened his court with prayer. So the young Bryan was early taught religion, democracy and thrift. At school he was serious and ambitious. Like most boys, he grew up with the belief that *any* boy could be President, and he took it seriously. In school and college he was chiefly interested in speaking, mainly on politics and religion.

After he was admitted to the bar, he opened an office at Jacksonville, Illinois, where he made a very slender living. So he left Jacksonville and settled in Lincoln, Nebraska, where he likewise found it very hard to support himself from his practice. His love of politics and his personal ambition soon lured him away from the law. After a short residence in Lincoln, he was nominated and elected to Congress as a Democrat. The Populist movement was then upsetting old political plans. Naturally Mr. Bryan felt sympathetic toward this movement, for it bore all the zeal and enthusiasm of a crusade. In Congress he soon made himself heard. He was a Free Trader, and under Cleveland the tariff was the paramount issue in politics. Mr. Bryan made a careful study of this question, and was able to make himself a leading figure in the congressional debates. As the Populist movement developed, the free coinage of silver came to the fore. Mr. Bryan was one of the outstanding forces in defense of this new doctrine. On these issues he easily attracted the notice of the country.

Mr. Werner makes us well acquainted with the man, and his strength and weakness. Mr. Bryan was endowed with a marvellous voice and an intense ambition. His mind was alert; he had a very unusual gift for a simple statement of his case; and he soon distinguished himself in Washington. Meanwhile the Populist movement was sweeping like wildfire over the prairies and plains. Without leaving the Democratic party, Mr. Bryan adopted the main planks of the Populist platform. In 1896 he came to the National Democratic Convention with a contesting delegation. No doubt he came there hoping, if not expecting, to get the nomination for President at the hands of the Democratic party. Already he was well known; he had gained universal attention in Congress, and he had earned his position.

Mr. Bryan headed the contesting delegation from Ne-

braska. Mr. Werner tells the story of Bryan's capture of the convention in a most vivid, careful and entertaining manner. It is quite evident that Mr. Werner has a sort of admiration for the dashing young knight and his cause—a feeling with which I have always sympathized. Mr. Werner has a fine theme. Perhaps no episode in American politics was more dramatic than this. A young man enters the National Convention. He is not a candidate nor even a delegate; he makes a fight for a seat in the convention, and, by one of the most forcible and moving speeches ever made, he goes out at the head of his party with the nomination for President in his hands.

Mr. Werner has taken great pains to tell the story of the ensuing campaign, and he tells it remarkably well. It was one of the most extraordinary campaigns ever known in American politics. The farmers, the toilers, the poor and unfortunate looked on Bryan as their champion and savior. Against him was arraigned the great power of corporate wealth, managed by the most skillful politicians of the land. Nearly all the newspapers were against Bryan and the Democratic party. Mr. Bryan traveled over the length and breadth of the land, speaking in cities, towns and villages, and talking from the rear platforms of trains. He was young and strong and filled with zeal for his cause. No one before or since ever made such a campaign. By every fair rule, Bryan should have won by an overwhelming majority. The country was literally and shamelessly purchased for McKinley. Even with the flood of money poured out to the people to help McKinley, a change of 14,001 votes properly distributed would have elected Bryan. The third chapter of Mr. Werner's book is one of the best summaries of this notable campaign ever written.

After the defeat of Bryan in 1899, he kept up his fight for the free coinage of silver and other radical causes for several years. He was again nominated for President four years after his first defeat; Bryan waged his campaign on the duty of returning the Philippines to the Filipinos, while the forces of the Republican party were assembled for the full dinner-pail. Of course, that part of the citizenry that never carried a dinner-pail was unanimously for McKinley for the second term, and Bryan was again defeated. Skipping one campaign, Mr. Bryan was again nominated and defeated, in 1908. During all these campaigns, the East, and most of the Middle West, stood solidly against Bryan. Business and wealth and most of the newspapers did all in their power to defeat him. Seldom have there been political campaigns that brought about such a radical cleavage between the rich and the poor. For many years after his last defeat, Bryan was more or less powerful in the Democratic councils. Still he could not muster sufficient following to carry another convention. Up to the end of his life he was always present at National Conventions. No one seems quite sure whether he was really playing for a nomination, or trying to keep the party true to what Bryan considered the cause of the people.

In 1896, and in the ensuing campaign, the Republicans unmercifully ridiculed the idea of increasing the currency by the free and unlimited coinage of silver. Still, immediately after the campaign, gold was discovered in greater volume than gold and silver together had measured before. This continued until the War and the new banking act. Since that time, the Federal Reserve Bank has issued so much currency that every semblance of a gold standard has disappeared. The history of our monetary system since 1896 seems to show clearly that Mr. Bryan was right in

his position that the country needed more currency.

Mr. Werner carefully and interestingly sketches Mr. Bryan's activities after his political career. As his strength in the Democratic party waned, he turned his mind more and more to other questions. He was always a very religious man; even in the rush and pressure of the campaign of 1896 he would never make a political speech on Sunday. Likewise, he was always personally a "dry"—although, until he stopped running for the presidency, he did not believe in national prohibition. As it grew plainer that he would never again be a candidate, he became more fanatical on the subjects of religion and prohibition. Toward the end of his career he was looked upon as a leader of the movement to bring religion and prohibition into politics.

It is evident that Mr. Bryan never permitted himself to make a study of the foundation of his religious faith. In reference to evolution, he said that he was more interested in "the rock of ages than in the age of rocks." Like most persons, he inherited his religious opinions, and all of his studies were directed toward stifling his own doubts.

Mr. Werner discusses Bryan's Chautauqua activities while he was in the Cabinet as Secretary of State, as well as before and after. This furnishes a very amusing topic. Necessarily, his appearance on a platform, sandwiched between bell-ringers and jugglers, seems at least to lack dignity, especially while he was Secretary of State under Mr. Wilson. However, impropriety is not one of the greater of sins. For years Mr. Bryan had little income outside of his Chautauqua lectures. He easily led every other speaker in the amount of money he could command. In a day when everyone is striving for money, we should not be too critical of Mr. Bryan's Chautauqua career. At least Mr. Bryan never sought to get legislation to help him get rich. And it must be borne in mind that the criticisms of Mr. Bryan's Chautauqua life came largely from those who openly and freely advocated that the government should be administered for their personal and financial interests. Not only this, but they never hesitated to use it on all occasions. I cannot avoid the same feeling in regard to Bryan's operations in Florida land; everyone else was getting money in the same real-estate game. Mr. Bryan made speeches to attract the crowd while someone else sold the lots. Most likely both were more or less sincere, especially Bryan. He was very credulous, anyhow; he really believed that Eve was made from one of Adam's ribs. Somehow business in general is the art of selling things for more than they are worth, so why censure Bryan? This kind of criticism is born of the fact that Bryan was an idealist, and no one thinks that an idealist should have any money. However particular the idealist may be as to how he gets his money, it doesn't count if he really gets it. The ravens should feed the idealist. But they do not.

Mr. Bryan's religious activities and his prohibition rantings, like his foolish fight against evolution, have been set down by many as efforts to be nominated again for President. Attributing motives for human conduct is never sure, and is generally malicious. Although I am convinced that all of his work in this direction was not only foolish but dangerous to the happiness of the world, I am satisfied that Mr. Bryan was sincere. All of his political activities, as well as his religious endeavors, show sincerity to the verge of fanaticism. And a fanatic I believe Mr. Bryan was. Fanatics in any age are dangerous to the peace and pleasure of the world, but there is a very clear distinction between the fanatic and the charlatan. In the

days of the Dayton trial, when he was using all his waning strength to make it a crime to study science, I observed him very closely. His eyes were the eyes of a fanatic. His mouth was tight and firmly set. He had a cruel look. His work at this time was entirely devoid of humor. He was bent on saving souls. He looked like a witch-burner. But I couldn't help the belief that, as he might possibly put others to death, he would just as resolutely go to death himself, for almost anything that he believed.

No one knows the right mixture in the individual that makes for the well-being of the world. To be too serious is a doubtful attitude. Yet there is something about deep convictions that must always appeal to men. Mr. Werner has drawn a most interesting and honest portrait of one of the most forceful men that ever disturbed American politics and American life. CLARENCE DARROW.

Behind the Russian Wall

The Curious Lottery: And Other Tales of Russian Justice, by Walter Duranty. New York: Coward-McCann. \$2.50.

The Naked Year, by Boris Pilnyak. Translated by Alec Brown. New York: Payson and Clarke, Ltd. \$2.50.

EVERY book that comes flying over Russia's high wall of officialdom, like the mysterious brick walls around old convents, is still, ten years after the Revolution, seized and read as news. How do people live inside the wall? Are the Communists, digging and planting within, demons or saints? We have been showered with proof that they are both until it is hard to remember, even now, that they are neither, but merely people. Mr. Walter Duranty is a reporter who has spent the past eight years in Moscow, sending out information as to what life is like behind the wall. In "The Curious Lottery," he continues to be the reporter. His book is an account of ten trials that have been held in Soviet Russia during his stay there. Some of the cases he reports are amusing and some horrible, some the bad luck of obscure peasants and some dramatic conspiracies against the State. He tells of the peasant whose daughter was mistreated, one warm summer afternoon in the fields, by three of the village boys, and how the father tried to capitalize the incident and was outwitted by the boys' parents. He tells of the woman who murdered her drunkard husband and would have escaped punishment had she not ordered masses for his soul. He tells of the arrest of all but one of the officials of the Precious Metal and Jewel Department of the Soviet government, for the theft of five thousand carats' weight of jewels and over half a ton of gold: sixty prisoners tried in a block and eighteen of them sentenced to death. He gives over a hundred pages to thumb-nail sketches of the chief actors in the famous Shakhta trial, in which fifty-two coal-mine technicians were charged with sabotage and conspiracy.

Mr. Duranty assures us in his preface that, since these cases were brought to light in the law courts, they are "true" and "are not distorted, as is commonly done by romancers, save the greatest." But since Mr. Duranty has written each of them up in a neat little newspaper story, they reach us as a form of fiction, just as biography, also based on facts, is a form of fiction. Mr. Duranty's particular sort of distortion leads him to see his Communists neither as demons, nor as saints, nor even as people, but as good stories. And, as he is a clever reporter, and Russians appear to be as greedy, blundering, and treacherous as the rest of us, the stories are, indeed, good ones. But the

ready-made, threadbare style in which Mr. Duranty tells them is too thin to hold any imaginative insight; and so, although the facts are all facts, and the tales are deft, they leave little impression of reality in the reader's mind.

"The Naked Year," by Boris Pilnyak, translated by Alec Brown, is in almost every way the opposite of "The Curious Lottery": clumsy and confused in form, its style is charged with electricity of the imagination. The publishers inform us that "The Naked Year" is the first of a series of novels by the younger writers of Soviet Russia. From a general introduction to the series, by Prince Mirsky, this reviewer learns that, during the first years of Soviet power, the only literature in Russia was poetry; for there was not enough paper to print prose. When fiction returned, in 1921, thanks to the New Economic Policy, it was "dominated"—still according to the Prince—"by poetry and the cult of the dynamic form." Pilnyak's book was one of the first novels to appear under this new influence.

"The Naked Year" was published in 1922, and it describes the famine year of 1920-21 in Russia. As one may see, the material was dangerously new in Pilnyak's mind: writing about it, he is on the inside of the storm and sees only the confusion. No doubt a traveler caught in a simoon feels that its swirl extends beyond human sight in every direction; but an observer from a near-by mountain can see that it rages over a narrow strip of land, traveling, say, northwest, and that when it is gone the land looks much as it did before. The same is true about the passage of social upheavals across human nature; and when the artist begins to describe his struggle with the simoon, one expects him to climb a near-by mountain. Either the storm was too recent to leave Pilnyak any breath for climbing, or he was too seduced by the theory of dynamic form—more likely the first—but in any case, "The Naked Year" has every artistic virtue except the focus that distance gives.

For Pilnyak has heaped together a bookful of broken, vivid, sometimes masterly, sometimes amateurish sketches of peasants, soldiers, storekeepers, priests, Communists, anarchists, and down-at-the-heel aristocrats—men thriving on the new order and men rotting in it. Attempting to read the book through is a bewildering experience. The characters are glimpsed through the storm, struggling with it and usually head over heels in it; often one sees only the petticoats blown over their heads and the coat-tails in the wind; the account is given through various eyes, but it is frequently impossible to tell whose eyes are being used; and the impressionistic settings give one only the vaguest clue as to where one is. Perhaps the scale of the panorama was too great for Pilnyak to manage, and the material was obviously too recent to have been digested. Even Pilnyak, who is an artist, sometimes thought of his Communists as news.

There will be critics, of course, to claim that the confusion of such a book as "The Naked Year" is the author's device for mirroring the confusion of the scene it depicts. But those who think so fail to distinguish between confusion as a theme and confusion in the artist's mind as he approaches his theme.

Yet, stagger as it may, Pilnyak's book shows the vigor and freshness of great writing: he swings from scene to scene in his panorama, imperfectly but nobly; his strokes are muscular and living; he kneads his language and shapes it for his own uses. This flexible language must have given the translator, Mr. Alec Brown, many a bad hour. Anyone who has ever translated from one language into another will realize that he has overcome many difficulties and that his English text, though uneven, is often splendidly successful.

LAWRENCE S. MORRIS.

Hello, Sherwood!

Hello Towns!, by Sherwood Anderson. New York: Horace Liveright. 339 pages. \$3.

HELLO, readers of The New Republic! I have been reading a book. It is by Sherwood Anderson. He liked to write it more than I enjoyed reading it. I kept saying to myself, "Can anyone honestly be as simple as that?"

When he heads the preface "Let Me Explain" instead of "Preface," is it because the word "preface" is really too sophisticated for him or is he trying to be cute? Is he an honest-Injun adult-infant or is he just trying to fool the grown-ups? All the horrid tales I have heard about his plastering a curl on his forehead before going out come back to me.

"Hurrah!" he writes. "I'm a nut!"

Do you think he has honest-to-goodness long trousers rolled up beneath his rompers? Has he got a cigar hidden in his sand-pail?

Quit asking questions.

You are a reviewer.

The book consists chiefly of extracts from the two newspapers in Marion, Virginia. Sherwood Anderson is owner, editor and chief reporter. Whatever his attitude is towards the readers of the book, he was certainly not a whole-hearted editor.

What must the good people of Marion have thought when he went to Washington to interview Mr. Hoover and came back with the account of a Chinese painting of the Emperor Ming Huang and his concubine Kuei-fei in a garden which he had seen in the Freer Gallery?

Was it pure artlessness that made him tell them that morals are largely a matter of brains and that a little decent paganism wouldn't hurt them?

What did he mean by calling the town dump-heap "Henry Mencken Park"?

A great deal of the book is plain reporting. Someone is going to drive a car a hundred hours without stopping. O. K. Harris shot a man who tried to start an affair with his daughter. Tom Doyle stole a pair of shoes. He was caught and taken before Justice Francis at Chiltowie. He got thirty days and fifty dollars.

Supposing we take today's paper and get together a "Hello, Cities!" Four die as steel hits scaffold in twenty-two-story plunge. Leviathan sails for home with plenty of drink. Governor Roosevelt's son engaged to Harvey Cushing's daughter.

Sherwood Anderson is certainly more human than The New York Times.

But only a few things in the book have literary excellence. The parts about Nellie the cat. The editorial on local jail conditions. A walk in New York on a rainy night. The account of a mountain dance.

This last is the best in the book. If only Sherwood Anderson, the country editor, would become the old Sherwood Anderson, the teller of tales! As country editor he sheds a friendly glow over the townspeople. That is much nicer than Sinclair Lewis's malicious light. But you feel he is thinking, "See how friendly I am!" The style is so consciously artless that it robs the matter of conviction.

He is a grown-up. Let him write like a grown-up.

This is my idea of Sherwood Anderson's style. I hope you like it. I don't.

Maybe I am hard to please.

GEOFFREY T. HELLMAN.

In the Beginning

The Child's Conception of the World, by Jean Piaget. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company. 307 pages. \$4.

THE thought process has ever been the golden fleece of psychology, inaccessible, elusive, beset by technical obstacles as formidable as the mythological dragons. If M. Piaget comes nearer his goal than other psychologists, and I believe he does, it is by attacking the citadel on every front instead of belaboring just one spot. Thus his first approach to the thought process is through the language of the child (see "Language and Thought of the Child"); his second is a direct attack on judgment and reasoning (see "Judgment and Reasoning of the Child"); his third is an analysis of the child's conception of the world (reported in the current volume); and his fourth is directed against the child's concept of physical causality ("Physical Causality," completed but not yet published). If, on the other hand, he does not quite touch the goal, it is because of methodological difficulties inherent in the problem. A systematic study of thought introduces a factor of artificiality which renders the results questionable. It is this limitation in the only feasible technique which prompted M. Piaget's quadrilateral approach.

In "The Child's Conception of the World" such terms as egocentricity, realism, animism, and artificialism, as applied to the child, are given greater significance and universality. Egocentricity is shown to be rooted in the child's perceptual and conceptual limitations which make it possible for him to enjoy the illusion that the world is confined to his own person. Contrary to popular opinion, consummate egocentricity is the antithesis of self-consciousness which presupposes a distinction between the self and the world. All of life is colored to some extent by this basic illusion.

At the basis of realism is the confusion between being and seeming which is referred back to the child's ignorance of subjectivity. Other manifestations of this primitive realism are the inability to discriminate between the sign and the thing signified, as, for example, between the word "sun" and the sun itself; between internal and external, with the result that dreams and speech are located outside the subject; between thought and matter, as when thought is described as air or a whisper.

Animism, the inability to differentiate between the living and inert, is but another aspect of the child's earliest notion of the world as a "primitive continuum," in which all things surrounding the self are endowed with the qualities possessed by the self—life, awareness, and will.

Superficially, the child's artificialism, that is, his belief that things are the product of human creation, appears incompatible with animism, but in the light, or rather, in the darkness of his limited experience, there is no discrepancy. He regards himself as having been made by his parents and yet alive, and does not hesitate to assign the same dualism to things outside himself.

All of these characteristics of thought, egocentricity, realism, animism, and artificialism, undergo an evolutionary development, conditioned by and parallel with the accumulation of the child's experience, the force which pushes the confines of his world ever further from his own person. The application of M. Piaget's findings to the thought of primitives and of the modern adult cannot be missed. One eagerly awaits the publication of "Physical Causality," which will complete his tetralogy on thought.

AUGUSTA ALPERT.

The Pedro Gorino

The Pedro Gorino, by Captain Harry Dean and Sterling North. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. 262 pages. \$3.50.

THE Pedro Gorino" is a substantial and significant book, though its early pages lack a certain vitality. The man writes of his childhood voyages from the distance of years, saddened by the failure of his dream and the treatment of his people. This account of an attempt to found a South African empire is given by Captain Dean, descendant of that long line of aristocratic seamen which was founded in America by Said Kafu, and is set down by a young collegiate poet, an able and sympathetic scribe.

Once the captain has assumed command of the "Pedro Gorino," and has become a part of the complex life of South Africa during the Boer War, his narrative comes alive and makes rich reading. He is a dreamer—"The waterfall and cliffs curving away on either hand seemed backdrops to a magnificent stage. Could the stage setting be too stupendous that was to form the background for the Ethiopian Empire?"—yet he has engaged in varied and vigorous activity all his life. He has been captain and trader, whaler, diamond miner, lion hunter, peacemaker and diplomat among the native tribes, and builder of schools and roads. Across the tapestry of his story pass memorable figures—crude, jovial Boers, imperialists depicted with a bitter pen, diamond smugglers, black missionaries, native kings. Because of his activities he was considered "the most dangerous Negro in the world." The dominant race wrecked his plans of empire, but in spite of them, he has, in this rich book, created a continent. For the reader who likes his excitement with a literary flavor, this adventurer captain has opened a treasure chest of stirring incident.

LOIS SUTHERLAND SPEAR.

A Sequel to "The Communist Schoolboy"

The Diary of a Communist Undergraduate, by N. Ognyov. Translated from the Russian by Alexander Werth. New York: Payson and Clarke. 288 pages. \$2.50.

THOSE who read that remarkable document, "The Diary of a Communist Schoolboy," will be interested in this sequel, though it is neither as revealing nor as good a job as the first volume. It should be repeated, for the benefit of those who have read neither, that the author, Ognyov, is not himself the diarist, that he puts his intimate and humorous knowledge of Soviet life in the mouth of a youngster, Kostya Ryabtsov, whose slangy narrative of his daily life sounds exactly like a genuine diary. And so, in a sense, it is a document, and a document—this is truer of the "Schoolboy" than of the "Undergraduate" volume—which tells us more of the things one really wants to know about contemporary Russian life in Moscow than any other book I have seen.

Kostya, a sort of communistic Huck Finn, full of mischief, animal spirits and undigested revolutionary ideology, finds that life is very different now that he has left school and wants to enter the university. He cannot decide what to study, and he has no money. There is no one in particular to help him. "The collective body which supported

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me psychologically at school has ceased to exist." He feels a homesick longing for that smaller world, so much more turbulent and independent, so much more like the great world than our own schools. He thinks he would like to be a writer, he is attracted to the law, he visits one of his friends, a girl, in the class where they are dissecting human corpses. (A horrible bit, that, and extraordinarily real.) He goes to miscellaneous lectures, attended by lean and hungry and often ragged students, and he hears from the professors such sensible instructions as this: "Russia is undergoing a great shaking process. This process is at times brutal and absurd, but that doesn't matter. Russia is being awakened—that is the important point."

Yes, that is the important point, and in reading the imagined pages from this starved and floundering and courageous young life, the brutal and the absurd, the horrible atmosphere of the student hostels, the fringes of the new society, haunted by strange mystical sects, half-crazed civil war veterans, princes in disguise and many doubtful characters come near to obscuring the central fact: that Russia and all its young Kostyas, though hungry and bewildered, are, at any rate, wide awake.

ROBERT LITTELL.

Fiction Notes

In Those Days, by Harvey Fergusson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. \$2.50.

IN those days pioneer wagons made their slow way across the wilderness of the great Southwest. Yankee settlers lost identity among the Indians and the Mexicans; half-breeds came to represent human triumph over physical obstacles, and gangs of Irishmen came to build the railroad. As they pleased, men loved, gambled, drank, and killed. Prosperity and the intense business of living wiped out memories, made ultimate ambitions unpractical, and allowed no leisure for introspection. Those were the glorious sixties and seventies along the Santa Fé trail. That was an age of activity when energy was spent in other ways than in historical reflection, and so it might have been wiser if Mr. Fergusson had not abandoned his chief character to a summarizing of the civilization which he had helped to build. But the whole effect is so colorful and the various episodes are so well handled that it is not difficult to indulge the author's extra emphasis on his principal idea: the romance of realism.

J. D. T.

Cement, by Feodor Gladkov. Translated from the Russian by A. S. Arthur and C. Ashleigh. New York: International Publishers. \$2.50.

IF the Soviet Republic can inspire such literary work as is revealed in this book, then under Communism, Russian letters will not suffer. Gladkov's narrative, the first novel to rise out of the turbulence of the Revolution, is a dramatic and pulsating tale. Vividly he portrays life under the Soviet rule—life as it affects the individual, but even more important than that, life as it is represented in the relationship of the masses to the economic policies of the nation. Through this story of a typical Soviet community run the interwoven threads of life of Gleb and Dasha—the inevitable human equation that even the ruthless system of nationalization or socialization cannot obliterate. The conflict in the novel is furnished by the struggle of the individual's sentiment of love against the adamant policy which demands that everything shall be subordinated to

the good of the State. Love between husband and wife, between parent and child—these are considered but unfortunate weaknesses which must be stamped out of the soul so that the mind can be free to devote its full resources to the greater glory of the Soviet. There are moments in this story when Gladkov seems to have been swept off his feet by the power of his own narrative. But these chaotic and somewhat incoherent intervals are rare. For the greater part, the work is clear-cut and lucid, moving forward with dynamic force; and the chord for the theme is a high, triumphant note of victory which drowns out the petty cries of discontent.

A. J. B.

Hooch, by Charles Francis Coe. New York: Doubleday, Doran and Company. \$2.

HOOCH," printed for and sponsored by the Crime Club, was probably chosen by the blindfold test. What other "crimes" the club specializes in doesn't appear, but this offense merits one of Mr. Banton's John Doe indictments. Here is no fat story; it is as worn and threadbare as the carpet in O. Henry's "Furnished Room," and its lean, unsalted lines won't satisfy readers hungry for raw meat. Mr. Coe has much flinty material, but somehow his steel lacks that expert touch which brings forth the sparks. He makes it plain that he despises his crooks. That attitude is fine in a policeman, but fatal to an author. Bill Sykes is an unpleasant type, but I am sure Dickens loved him—at least while he was sketching him in. And so in "Hooch" you have a parade of hollow and unconvincing characters. The little crooks walk on their heels; they are robotic, loud and noisy, boastful winners and whining losers. The author painstakingly damns them all and several with the dirty-deuce complex, while his bootleg kings are forever snatching furtive glances over their shoulders as if expecting somebody to swing an ace on them. This much can be truthfully said for "Hooch"; if, as it is claimed, college professors, teachers and other intellectuals read crook-fiction solely as an escape from literature, here, then, is one book that affords them a perfect getaway.

J. B.

Contributors

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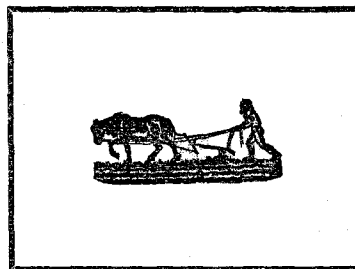
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